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MEMOIRS OF THE VERNEY FAMILY

DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

COMPILED FROM THE PAPERS AND ILLUSTRATED BY THE PORTRAITS
AT CLAYDON HOUSE BY

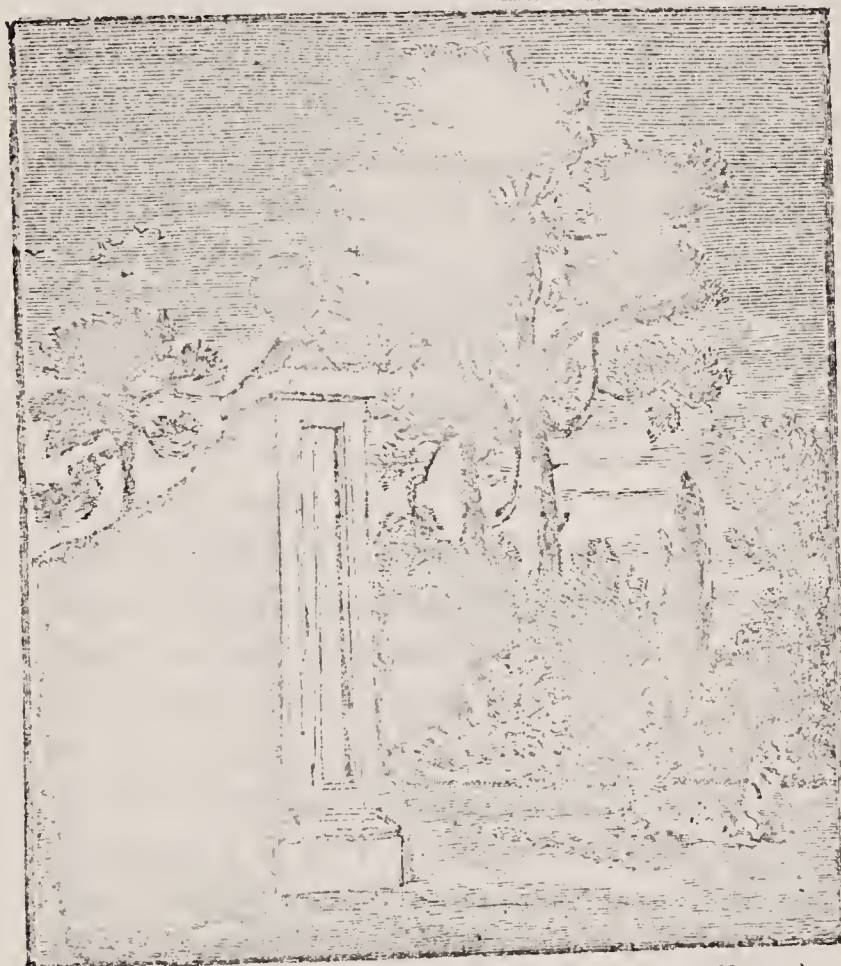
FRANCES PARTHENOPE VERNEY

AND

MARGARET M. VERNEY

7.3

V. 3, pt. 2



THE GARDEN (*From a Sketch by F. P. Lady Verney*)

'more yet of this,
For 'tis a chronicle of day by day,
Not a relation for a breakfast'

THIRD EDITION

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

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avec ses Cheveux bien Courts (neammoins sans Peruque quoy-
qu'il en avoit une dans sa Pochette, comme il me confessa
apres) et tout le long des deux Costes anterieures de la Teste
jusques à ses oreilles, ses cheveux estoient rognés avecques
siseaux, il estoit Homme bien puissant et de plus grande
Taille que mon Cousin, et estoit aussi fort beau & civil en
son Deportement, et ressembloit un Gentil-homme beaucoup
plusque Luy, il me dit que son Nom est Alured vulgairement
appelé Aldredd, Fils d'un des juges du defeunct Roy selon le
rapport d'Abercromy, & ils me dirent Tous deux qu'il vous
est cogueu (autrement je ne les aurois pas logés) et qu'il a
esté (a scavoir Aluredd) avec vous, et que vous le priasses
en son Retour de regarder vos sources à Knowle-Hill, et que
vous m'ekririez ou à Holnes, pour les faire vuider, et puis
luy montrer, car il pretend estre grand Ingenieur, et qu'il
vint de Coventry, ayant esté là pour voir, s'il pouvait tirer
l'eau en telle sorte, qu'elle n'incommodera pas ceux, qui
travaillent dans la Fosse pour Charbons, le Barronett Smith
luy ayant dit comment l'eau descoule; il me dit aussi qu'ils
venaient de Glocester, et il me racconta outre cela, qu'il
avoit esté eslevé sur la Mer 18 Ans, et qu'il a esté Lieutenant
de Sir Jean Lawson nostre Vice-Admiral, et que son defeunct
Frère aisé estait Gentilhomme de 800^l. sterlins de Rente en
Yorkshire, & qu'il avoit un autre Frère appartenant à la Loy
dans Grays-Inne: mais pour moy je soubsonne grandement
qu'il ment, nonobstant pour l'amour de tant de belles
Histoires, le lendemain j'allay luy montrer vos Fontaines à
Knowle-Hill, desquelles il prit la mesure avec grand soing, à
cequi regarde leur profondeur, pretendant qu'il estait obligé
à vous en rendre Conte: puis le mesme jour estant Samedy
dernier environs 5 heures apres Midy, ils s'en allerent de
Knowle-Hill vers Londres: ores je serois bien aise de scavoir
si la verité de tout cecy vous est cogueu.'

Sir Ralph had agreed to their coming, and would like
well to have water brought up to the house for a 'moderate
charge,' but cannot find any way how to secure himself from
loss if the engine broke down or was out of order 'as
commonly such engines are'; Sir John Winter, who is

Verney - 1972



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working in the Coventry coal mines, 'is like to lose all his labour & his charges too.'

The manners of some of the guests are alarmingly boisterous. 'This is no inviting wether to y^e Vaill of Alsbery,' writes Nancy Nicholas on a damp autumn day, 'I hope y^t y^r dep cuntry will make you all of a more paseable temper yⁿ ye have bin at New Market for there both y^e Men among y^m selfs & y^e women amoung y^m selfs have had great Quarils.'

Mun was abundantly feasted in return for his hospitalities. He is 'invited to eate Venison at Mr. Rocheforts, the Parson of Addington,' and he is in constant request with Sir Richard Pigott, the Dormers, the Temples at Stowe, Sir William Smith at Radclive, and Sir Peter Tyrrell. Sir Thos. Lee of Hartwell is 'a man of great state.' 'We were but 3 at Table,' Mun writes to Sir Ralph, who is laid up in town, 'yet our Treate was to that Degree of Magnificence that to relate the particulars to any sick person would be offensive, so I forbear.' He also receives 'furious & noble entertainment' at Hillesden, where Alexander Denton considers he can never have sufficient 'lodging guests,' and his beautiful wife Hester is of the same opinion.

There is much eating and drinking in Mun's correspondence. Dr. Denton has a picturesque banquet: 'All ye gange was here last night drinking Sir Ralph's health & preying on a goodly formidable beast out of y^e Fens called a Bustard, w^{ch} was more then a whole round table & by standers could devoure, When will Barley yard or Knowle Hill produce such a Beast?' 'I pray, good Mun,' writes Sir Ralph anxiously, 'keepe goode Howers, both for eating & sleeping, & bee very Temperate, for many dye of Pleurisies, after a fit of Good fellowship . . . & the excesses of last Christmas have sent many into another world.' Mun agrees: 'me semble que le Monde dans ce Temps icy se haste grandement d'aller à l'Autre,' but he does not mend his ways; though he is severe upon other people's imprudences: 'Lady Hobart might happily spinne out her Thredd of life a long while yet, if she do not cut it off by quality & quantity of Dyet.'

March 16,
1675.

Lady Gardiner laments that 'there be such revellings and gaming in the Inns of Court at Christmas time,' that it is dangerous to allow Jack to remain in town. Sir John Busby and his lady and other friends meet at the White House, and after the early dinner, play cards till midnight. The next day Edmund takes over his party to dine at Addington, 'after which we fell to cards and continued playing till 9 a'clock' the following morning.

Aug. 26,
1675.

This is his account of a Bucks wedding: 'I dined at Stow yesterday Nelly Denton & Jack Stewkeley went wth mee: Wee met S^r Harry Andrewes, & his Lady & Daughter his only Child There, as also Cosen Risley & his Lady & Jack Dodington, & 3 Sisters of Lady Temple, & Mr. Stanion, Husband to one of them, & Nedd Andrewes and Grosve his Father in Law, & Thom. Temple & an other old Temple with 3 or 4 Very Drunken Parsons, w^{ch} made up our Company, Lady Baltinglasse was invited & promised to be there but ffayled, Wee saw S^r Richard & his ffine Lady wedded, & flung the stockin, & then left Them to Themselves, and soe in this manner was Ended the celebration of his Marriage à la mode, after that, wee hadd Musick, Feasting, Drinking, Revelling, Dancing & Kissing: it was Two of the Clock this Morning Before wee Gott Home.' Sir Ralph thought Mun's news 'so pleasantly related I have read it over & over.'

Sir Ralph exacted in his own house a strictly modern standard of sobriety, but Lady Gardiner, in giving a servant's character, thought it high praise that she 'could not hear that Tom was given to drink more then whot natur requiared.' In Mun's household, 'Nature' always made large demands on the cellar. When John, after his return from the East, owned land in Berkshire, the brothers compared notes: Mun writes: 'Y^r Arrabian Deserts as you call Them, are much More Cleanely than our dirty Country, & if you knew our People here as well as I do, you would find Them ffull as Irreligious & Brutish, as y^r People of Wasing, & perhaps more savage then the wild Heathenish Indians, For a Tenant of Myne, an old Man, at an Easter Communion

drank up all the wine in the sylver Callice & swore He would have his Peny worth out of it: Being he payd for it. By which you may see what manner of Men wee are in these Parts. I do not Think that among the Infidels, this story can be Matcht.'

But in spite of times of depression Edmund took an interest in his country life. He and his wife rebuilt the village inn, which with its high-pitched roof is still so picturesque a feature of East Claydon, with their shield and initials and the date over the door. Sir Ralph suggests



that a woman might keep the inn as well as a man: '2 boards in a room will serve for a table, & for Bedsteads, bedding, Linen, pewter & brass a little will serve at first.' Mun has his father's love of planting, and is getting black cherry stocks from the Chilterns at three halfpence or twopence apiece to graft choice kinds upon them, and crabstocks from 'my Lord Seudamore's in Herefordshire where the best grow.' Vines imported from Blois produce grapes in Sir Ralph's garden, and Edmund is laying out 'a little Viniard about two single Rowes of an Acres Length by Way of an Essay, but not to doe as Noah did afterwards'; he has

Aug. 25
1675.

a small pack of beagles who turn the kitchen spits when nobler sports fail, and we hear of pheasant-hawking in Runt's Wood. He knows every man and boy about the place, visits the old women who are sick, and sees to their funerals.

'I have informed y^e poore Evill People as much as I can concerning their being touched: though her Majestie bee ill, yet she is soe very good, that I am confident shee will Live eternally, happen to Her what can Here an Earth': 'Me seroit infiniment mieux dans les cieux, que sur cette Angleterre.'

Like his father, he has a great capacity for taking trouble, and writes numberless letters to get his men places, or to help on the village boys. One of these he has apprenticed, paying 5*l.* and giving him a good outfit of clothes. 'Nedd is so thick-sculled a fellow without any apprehension, & so indoseble, a cook is the easist trade he can think on for him,' but he proves 'very wavering': 'now that Nedd hath bin with Fosket he hath a mind to be a barber, then if he should smell out Will Scott's sweet shopp his mind will turn to be a perfumer, & so as oft as he spyes any new trade, whereas God watt his stupiditie will find it a hard Taske to learn one, therefore seeing he is such a Nass, he must be drove to understanding of it—& that if he doth not stick to sum thing he will com to nothing.' The master cook suggests that if the boy 'can neither write, read nor cast,' these three things might be useful to him, and offers to share with the Squire the cost of having him taught; meanwhile the boy refusing to scrape trenchers till his articles are signed, Edmund can only wish that the cook would baste him soundly with his ladle, he must be taught something 'be it butcher, cobbler, tincker or goldfinder, . . . if nothing of all this will doe, he must down in the Contry & be doomed to be a perpetuall hewer of wood & drawer of water & so ware a foole's coat & collars if he can yarne it.'

Jan. 1676.

Sir Ralph has a queer story to send: 'My Queen in Hampshire (that was soe handsome) is newly dead, and that very strangly; it seems she and another Lady (a particular

friende of hers) agreed that which of them soever died first, should give notice to the other of the Time she should Dye. And this friend of hers died severall yeares past. And about 6 or 8 Weekes since my Queen came to Preshaw, and stayed a fortnight or 3 weekes there, and was as merry, and looked as hansomly and as cheerfully as could bee, and went well away. And 3 dayes after, on a sudden she cried out that her friend now called her, and she must dye very soone, uppon which she immediately fell distracted, and is since Dead, and if this bee not strange, I know not what is. . . . I have now sent you one Dozen of Lemons, and 3 Dozen of Oranges in a Basket, covered with Napkin: I pray send the napkin to Lilly, for I have sent her word you will send it her, and tell me if she hath sent you your cloath that came upp with the Turkey and Bacon.'

Edmund is not to be outdone: 'The Death of the ^{Jan. 10,} ^{1678.} Queene in Hampshire is somewhat strange. We have as Strange a story of a black-smith of Stratten-Audley coming well in Health over Brackley Greene on Horseback: a Dogg with a Paper in his mouth mett Him, and Leapt up to Him so often, that at length He tooke the Paper and flung it away, whereupon the Dogg Leapt up at Him againe, and pinched Him by y^e shoulder, after which He came Home, and fell madd, and so Died, and the paper with bloody Characters which no Body could Read was found in his Chamber. I humbly thank you for the Lemons and Orenges you sent me, but the Carryer left them behind him.'

When we turn to the comments Edmund makes on public affairs, we find his knowledge of them to be far more intimate than anything Macaulay is willing to allow to the 'rustic aristocracy.' He discusses with Sir Ralph the campaigns of Louis XIV., the advance of the Turks against Austria, the politics of Denmark and Sweden, the articles of peace with Algiers, the condition of the West Indies, the Levant trade, and our relations with the Dutch, whom he detests. Sir Ralph gets him the latest published map of the seventeen provinces.

There are constant jokes at the expense of the country

March 5,
1668.

cousins, but they are well informed on all the questions of the day. Dr. Denton writes: 'Most excellent Clowne, that is glad his well-bred horses can run noe faster than an ordinary Cow can trot. It were a good deed to send you noe newes, for that reason, & because there is little, you shall know but little. The great debate was yesterday about the Phanaticks & wonderful tugging there was, the result at last was that the King should be desired by the H. of C. to sett out his proclamation for putting the lawes in execution ag^t Papists, Phanaticks, etc. Y^r coz. of Ormond is coming over . . . this is newes enough for a hob-nail-clowne.' This note is addressed 'For Calfe Raph the Cow-house of Claydon.' As a matter of fact they all come up for 'the Terme,' and Cary mentions it as a great grievance that her 'young company have been kept above 3 years out of London.' Any event of note at Court or in the City finds its way in due time to the White House, accidents apart—for the carrier's cart has been known to break down, bogged, benighted in Quainton Marsh, when the mail was entirely lost; another time an Aylesbury waggoner perceives the letters 'in the cart rout when his wheel was just a going over them' and brings them on. The Grand Duke Cosmo of Tuscany was magnificently entertained by the Dukes of Albemarle and Buckingham. Edmund remarks that the Italians have 'far more aptitude for self-government than we Northerners have'; he wishes that the example of decorum and simplicity set by this great prince might be taken to heart in England, and most of all by himself. Mun was elaborately respectful to the severer Virtues, with whom he had only a bowing acquaintance.

Sept. 7,
1669.

Dr. Denton gives us one more glimpse of 'la Reine Malheureuse,' Henrietta Maria. 'The night the Queen Mother died she called for her will, said she did not like it, tore off the seals, said she would alter it to-morrow; she complained much of want of sleep, so an opiate was ordained her, & her physician watched with her to give or not to give it to her, he did not like to give it her, but her impatency extorted it from him, & she died that night.'

The year 1670 opened with the death of Monk, whose name for ten years had been in all men's mouths as the man to help in any crisis: 'On Mounday morning my Lord ^{Jan. 5,} Generall died,' Sir Ralph writes to Mun, ' & left 1,200*l.* per ^{1670.} ann: in land, & 18,000 Pounds in Money besides what the Dutches hath in Plate, Jewellery, & in her Privy Purse. tis beeleeved she will never come out of her chamber, being so farre Gon in a consumption. Hee desired the King to give his sonne after him, the Lord Lieutenancy of Devonsheire, and that hee might bee of his Majesties in his Roome, and enjoy his Lodgings at Whitehall. . . . The King sent a Garter to the Young Duke, as soone as his Father was dead, and will burry him at his owne charge, hee is to lie in State at Somerset House, and there is a committee appointed to consider of all things for the Funerall . . . hee was cured of his Dropsie, but had something like an Anchois growne in one of his Arteries which stoped the Passage of his Blood, wh: the Phisitians call soe many hard names, that I can neither write, nor remember them. Mr. Gape was present when the Body was opened. . . . The Young Duke being married on Thursday last to my Lord Ogles Daughter, & grandchilde to the Duke of Newcastle, is not like to bee so thrifty as his Father. . . . The King, Queen, Duke, & Dutches, have made their condoling visits to the Widdow Dutches.' Mun writes: 'Nostre generalissime Monk estoit ^{Jan. 10,} un homme de bien et brave toutafait, à qui la nation estoit ^{1670.} beaucoup obligée, et ainsi doit faire dueil comme ayant perdu sa principale gloire.'

A fortnight later Margaret Elmes died suddenly at Mr. ^{Jan. 19,} Gape's house in town. Edmund and Mary lost in her a warm ^{1670.} friend. At Preshaw they 'are all immersed in tears & sorrow,' and his friends are anxious about the effect of this shock on Sir Ralph's health, 'tho' to be unhappy,' Lady Gawdy asserts, 'is as natural as to be.' Cary writes to her nephew: 'The death of my deare sister Elmes hath bin a great troble to mee and I dar say so it was to yr fathar, for wee three took most comfort in each othar, though ther is four besids us, bot I recon now shee is gone our knot is broken.' There was

a family gathering at Claydon for her burial; the Rector's fee was 'a gold piece called a guinea,' then first coming into use.

Cary, left executor and residuary legatee, protests that she loves not to run headlong on her own judgment, and does her best to conciliate the family and to carry out her sister's wishes; she divides the clothes between Peg's maid and her sister Betty Adams, and behaves most unselfishly, only to find she has pleased nobody. Mr. Gape's charges for medical attendance and embalming seem on a scale more suited to his last great patient, the Duke of Albemarle, than to so thrifty a subject as Dame Elmes. Sir Thomas is as unreasonable about her death as he has been about every action of her life, and sends Cary a lawyer's letter to assure her that his late wife had no power to make a will at all. 'I have rit to my brother Elmes as modaratly as I could frame my selfe to due, he provoking mee so much About my poor Sister. Should I have sade les, I beleve hee wod think her frinds ware afraid of him and make him the more back-word, bot my opinion is that he will not pay a peny till he is sued.'

When in recent years the family vault underneath the chancel of Middle Claydon Church was opened, a mummy-shaped coffin was seen standing upright. The name on it was 'Margaret Elmes,' and John Webb the carpenter, on seeing it, observed that he now understood the tradition he had heard as a child, that one of the Verneys was buried thus, because she said 'she had been upright in her life and would be the same in death.' It was a curious means that the poor woman took to vindicate her reputation.

Feb. 16,
1670.

Sir Ralph was due in London for the marriage of the son of the Master of the Rolls to 'Mr Attorney General's daughter'; he writes to Mun, 'Our great wedding will bee over to morrow at night, & then I shall have more leasure. I have been Mounday & Tuesday at Kensington, & never thinke of Bed till 2 or 3 a clock in the Morning. Tomorrow tis kept at the Roles with great magnificence.' He had sought to be excused, but he was a guest too much valued

to be let off. 'I am glad you were overcome,' writes Lady Gáwdy, 'to be in the company of your friends; Sorrow is too harde for us alone, and your nature so pensive, and your reason so just, as if you were left to yourselfe, I feare you would indulge sadnes too much.'

Archbishop Sheldon, formerly Rector of Ickford, Bucks, was exhorting 'to conformity,' and there were epidemics of persecution against Nonconformists and Quakers, but the Verneys did not readily share in the panics due to what Dr. Denton styled 'Chimeras of Phanaticisme.' Sir Ralph wants 'to comprehend soc many Dissenters as possible in a Toleration Act.' He writes to Mun, 'Wee had need take
Feb. 27,
1672.

The most interesting event of the year 1670 is the arrival of the fascinating Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans. Edmund could not estimate, as we can, the political importance of her visit, but the fame of her goodness, her beauty, and her charm of manner reached East Claydon. 'The
May 11,
1670.

King,' Sir Ralph writes, 'sent to invite his sister, Madame, to London; but tis impossible she should come, for she will not yeild the Place to y^e Dutchesse of Yorke, nor can it bee allowed that the Dutchesse of Yorke should yeild it unto her.' This difficulty is solved a few days later in Henrietta's favour. 'The King & Duke are at Dover with Madame theire Sister, & this morning the Queen & Dutchesse goe thetherwards, to Visit her, all the Towne is gonn, & the Kings Musicke, & Duke's players, & all the Bravery that could bee got on such a sudden. The Dutchesse is to give the Place to Madame in this kingdome, because the Duke of Orleans alwaies gave it to the Duke of Yorke in France.'

... 'I heare the King sent the Earle of St. Albans to the
May 25,
1670.

K. of France, to get leave that his Sister might stay a few daies longer in England, & that she might come to London, & I beeleeve tis granted, & that they will all bee heere from Dover this Evening or to morrow, for the whole Court is weary of that place. Heere will bee all the bravery & Jollity that England can well afford, & more then will bee

payd for, in hast. Just now a friend came in, & tells mee all is crossed againe, & that there is noe leave granted, soe that our Bravery is like to bee at an End, but tis certaine Lady Castlemaine hath farre Exceeded all the French Ladies both in Bravery, & Bewty too.'

June 6,
1670.

Mun writes: 'Si Madame durant son sejour parmi nous a faict la Paix entre Tant de Monde icy, sans doute elle est retournée du moins avec cette Beatitude, d'avoir L'honneur d'estre appelée l'enfant du bon Dieu.' The country is still under the spell of that gracious presence when, ás Sir Roger expresses it, 'We are heer all startled at the news of the Dutchess of Orleans death.' Mun writes: 'Je condole fort la mort subite et inopinée de Madame, c'estoit une brave Princesse, et très illustre, je soubsonne beaucoup qu'elle a esté empoisonnée, et si cela se pouvait trouver, et que le Roi fut de mon humeur, il attempera Revenge. Je me repens a cet heure que j'ai fait mes habits de couleur, et puisque ce Malheur devait arriver, je souhaite qu'il fut venu auparavant que je les eu faits, ou apres qu'ils furent froissés.' It is a proof of the sorrow felt in England for the death of the Princess, that Mun should feel it necessary at East Claydon to put himself into mourning. Death allowed Henrietta Stuart the precedence which had been so hotly contested in an earthly court, and then Anne Hyde also received her summons.

June 26,
1670.

April 6,
1671.

Dr. Denton writes: 'The Duchess of Yorke died on Friday, opened on Satterday, embalmed on Sunday & buried last night. I know y^u longe to be satisfied whether Pro: or Pa: of w^{ch} ye towne speakes variously. by ye best & truest intelligence she did not dy a Papalina, but she made noe profession or confession eyther way. Her last acts were these, she dined hartily att Burlington house on Thursday before, and that night accordinge to custom she was about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an houre att her owne accustomed devotions and at her returne from Burlington house she called for her Chaplyn Dr. Turner to pray by her, ye Queen & ye Duke were private with her an hour or more on friday morninge & noe Preest, but Father Howard & I'a: Patrick were

attendinge accordinge to theyr duty on ye Queene in ye next roome. Ye Duke sent for ye Bpp of Oxon out of ye Chappell, who came, but her senses were first gone, in ye meane time ye Duke called "Dame doe ye know me," twice or thrice, yⁿ with much strivings she said "I" after a little respite she took a little courage & with what vehemency & tenderness she could she said "Duke, Duke, death is very terrible," which were her last words, I am well assured that she was never without 3 or 4 of her women soe that it was impossible a Priest could come to her.' The Duchess had been nursed with 'extraordinary sedulity' by a young maid of honour, Margaret Blagge¹ (afterwards Mrs. Godolphin), who had been from her childhood in the Duchess's service. She sorrowfully contrasted this scene with her own mother's devout death, who 'ended her life chearfully, left her family in order & was much lamented.' 'A princess honoured in power, with much witt, much money, much esteeme, was full of unspeakable tortur & died (poore creature) in doubt of her Religion without the Sacrament or divine by her, like a poore wretch. The dead Duchess none remembered after one weeke, none were sorry for her, she was tost & flung about, & every one did what they would with that stately carcase.'

Two years later 'the Duke has gone and many Popish Lords with him to meet the new Duchesse at Dover, Crow Bishop of Oxford went to marry them, they come to Whitehall by water, & so there will be no show in the city.' Sir Ralph remarks, after Mary of Modena has been a few months in England, that the new Duchess is better looking than he ever thought she would be; and thus is Anne Hyde, the mother of two English Queens, quite forgotten.

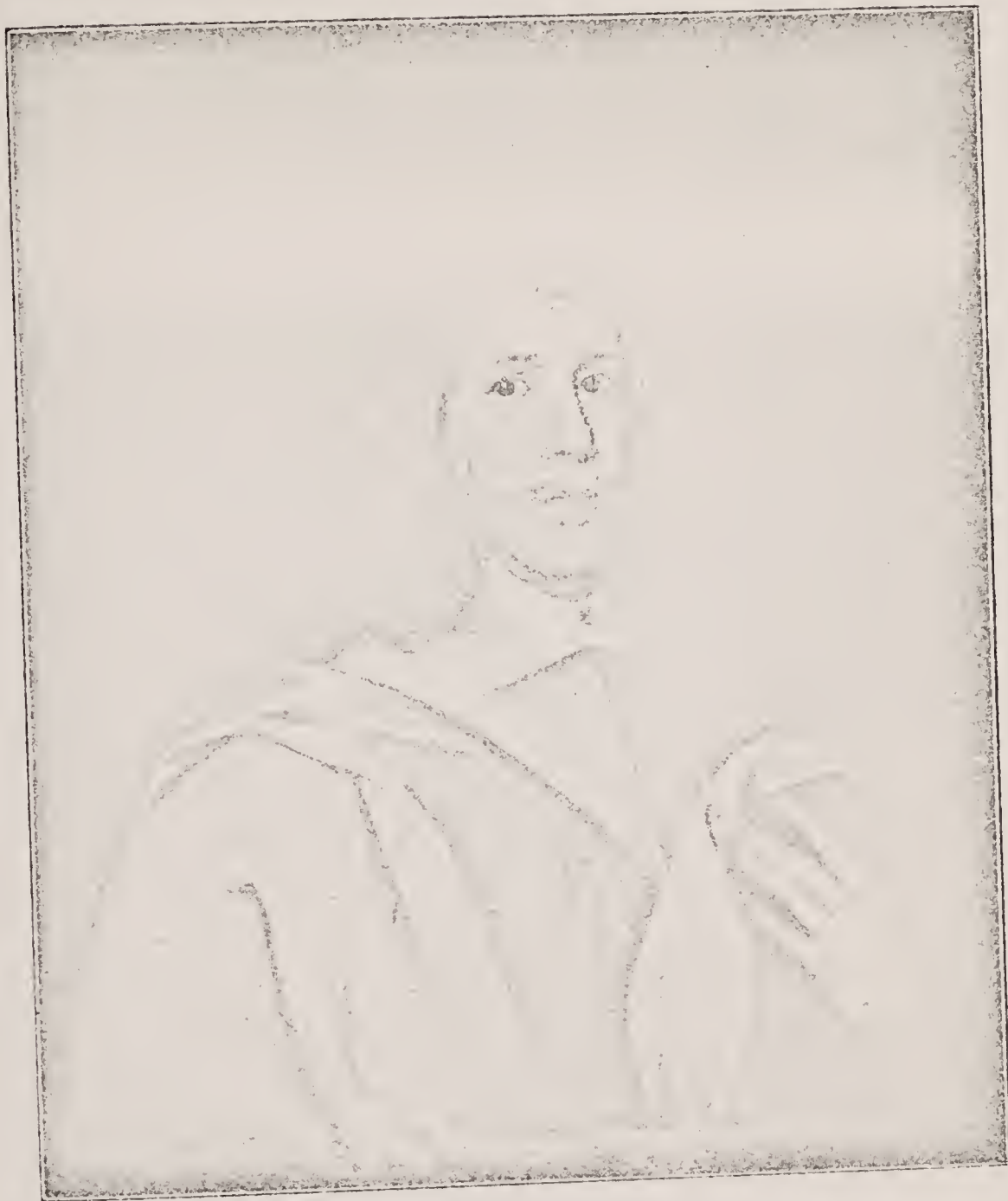
During all these years the old affectionate intercourse was kept up with the Burgoynes. Sir Roger was godfather to Edmund's eldest boy, and Sir Ralph's visits to Wroxall and Sutton were the events of the year to his devoted friend. Sir Roger's old age was brightened by the love of his second wife, Anne Robinson of Dighton, Yorkshire, who brought

¹ *Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, by John Evelyn, ed. Bp. of Oxford, 1847.

Nov. 20,
1673.

him another family of children. She was a capable and accomplished woman, but no one's opinion weighed with Trusty Roger, when Sir Ralph's was to be had. The proportions of the new terrace, the provisions of his will, the colour of a waistcoat, and the filling up of a living await his decision. And when Sir Roger is thrown 'into some small confusion' by finding that a guest 'who came unexpectedly on Saturday with my brother John, expresses a kindness for my daughter, tho' he hath not yet spoke with me about it,' he hastens to lay all the probabilities before his friend. When Mr. Simmons is accepted, Sir Ralph must pronounce
 June 1667. upon the trousseau, and choose the wedding-clothes. 'One coloured & two black gownes are to be made for the bride: what kinds of silk and lace should be got for the best black? what for the second, as also for the Couler'd that must beare the name of a wedding one, though not to be worn till the day after? what lace for the best handkerchief, points being out, & what value? I doubt the old fellow must have a new vest and tunick for the credit of the lass: if any I must desire you to provide materialls of all sorts according to yo^r own fancy, and I promise you they shall be liked provided not too deare: I am for black: having made me an ordinary stuff one very lately: I would have one for my sonn if I knew what. He has a stuff one newly made, but I would have another against that time, he is now going to Cambridge.' A few days later: 'My wife as myselfe acknowledges your favours having rec'd the things you sent, the hatt is very fitt, and my wife so much approves of the lace as to think it too good for hir selfe to weare, but I am apt to believe all women will be soon weaned from such thoughts, only shee desires to know what it costs.' Lady Burgoyne's point-lace came to 5*l.* 12*s.*, and the cuff-lace to 2*l.* 3*s.*

Sir Ralph was at Wroxall considering the many questions his host had pigeon-holed in his mind for the enjoyment of a personal discussion, when he heard that Henry was very ill, 'deeply gon in the Glanders' as Pen expressed it. But a few days before he had written to complain of a Claydon



SIR ROGER BURGOYNE, BART.

haunch of venison, which though 'my Lady Hobart had cookt it with vinegar, noe flesh could abide the smell of, but I & my friends will drinck your health & make merry with it as much as my health will give mee leave.' Sir Ralph hurried home 'as fast as his man's falling sickness would allow,' and there found the news of Henry's death, ^{Aug. 28, 1671.} which distressed him extremely. He had left all to Pen, and she wished him buried at Claydon, provided she could be laid beside him, which Sir Ralph heartily agreed to. Pen put up a handsome monument to his memory, which she tried to make Sir Ralph pay for—very shabbily, the relations thought—'but she is mad and will demand things.'

Edmund wrote to John at Aleppo: 'For domestic newes I shall acquaint you that my Uncle Henry Verney and my father's Cooke honest Michael Durant are both lately dead.' The adjective was reserved for the cook, whom in truth he considered the more valuable man. 'Misho,' as Claydon called him, had served his master, man and boy, for about twenty years, and such was his fame that no wedding breakfast, or funeral supper, or Christmas feast in the neighbourhood was felt to be adequate without his supervision.

The 'loyal & indigent' Colonel left behind him a bag of money in the Doctor's care, which the latter estimated to contain at least 700 guineas, if not 1,000; he had remarked genially that there were some gilt shillings in it. Penelope, who had learnt thrift in a hard school, took her family by surprise shortly after, by her marriage with 'Sir John Osborn K^t of Devonshire,' and still more by the announcement that she was worth 6,000*l*. 'I never heard of a more Joyed woman than my Sister Osborne,' writes Cary, 'I feare her good fortune will make all old women marry.'

'Pen was always a great scraper,' remarked a relation less happily gifted, 'but I thought she had not been so great a getter; Sr John is so high already in her opinion & affection she is like to prove a good wife to him, however she is for a Sister or an Aunt'; and the prediction was

verified. Lady Osborne had apartments 'on the stairs in Whitehall,' frequented the Court, kept her coach, and lived more than twenty years in the enjoyment of this evening sunshine, which she thoroughly appreciated.

1672.

The Dutch War has broken out, and Edmund is fretted by his own inaction. He had always been attracted by the Navy, and he seemed to know by instinct the names and tonnage of our ships, and their stations. Being very wroth at our naval disasters, and at what he deemed the cowardice and incapacity of our officers; unwieldy as he was, and more likely to sink a boat than to fight her, he suddenly resolved to volunteer. He had spoken to his father on the subject, but he makes an earnest appeal to him in writing; he feels the war a righteous one, and is ashamed to be out of the Fleet now that the Heir-apparent is engaged in it. He remembers the services of his grandfather and his glorious end, and that he was pleased to bestow his own name upon him at his baptism; he would seek deliverance in active service from all that he feels unworthy in his present life, and he earnestly begs his father's assistance in this—a turning-point in his life. But it was a wild project at best, an attempt to wrest out of the hand of Time the years of youth that had slipped away from him, and to the reasonable and unwarlike Sir Ralph it seemed too preposterous a plan for discussion. 'Mun, I pray say noe more of your desires to goe into the Fleet, unlesse you have a minde to render mee & your children miserable.' To make amends for his curt refusal he writes Mun a longer letter than usual, with all the news he specially cares to hear; he does not think 'the Hollander soe easy a bit to swallow' as some do; 'the little Victory, a shipp of 38 guns and 250 men was unhappily taken by the Dutch fleet. Capt. Fletcher commanded her & is very ill-spoken of, for hee yielded without shooting one Gunn. . . . 'Tis beeleeved the Dutch will fight under decks, that is only with cannon, for they want men & are affrayed to lose those they have. . . . Seamen & Watermen are daily impressed, there are 400 Men now sent out of the Guards, to supply

May 1672.

the shipps, till the Irish come upp, whom we hear are now landed.' There is a further story of the Kent frigate of 50 guns, 'lost within 3 leagues of Harwich. The seamen beleve she was bewicht, they tell stories of a crow hoveringe over them 2 days togeather in stormy weather &c. only ye captaine & 11 men saved.'

The letters meant to daunt Mun's ambitions, only roused them the more, but he bows to his father's will: '*je choisirai d'offrir violence à mon genie, et ainsi passer ma vie comme un Faisnéant plus tôt que comme un fils desobeissant*'; he pours out his pent-up wrath on Capt. Fletcher, whom he longs to see shot, and then relapses into the ordinary routine of his life in the heavy clay of his native county, '*ou je suis empestreé parmi mes yvrongues de Paisans.*'

Clarendon's name occurs frequently in Mun's letters, but his fall is referred to with less sympathy than he had a right to expect from the family of an old friend and colleague. The younger generation were more impressed by the Lord Chancellor's haughtiness than by his high principles. Mun thought his position unassailable, and that it was rash to show your teeth to so big a beast, unless you were prepared to bite to the bone. He always sided with the King whoever might be against him, and considered a fallen Minister to be necessarily in the wrong. When, after weary years of exile, the grand old Cavalier died abroad, the rancour against him suddenly subsided; he was buried in Westminster Abbey, 'Sir Ralph was one that held up his Pall, he was met by the Dean (in his episcopal habit) & Chapter, who sang him to his grave.' Jan. 7,
1675.

'Your friend Clarendon has lost his key,' writes Dr. Denton of his son; 'the pretence was that he struck the guard,' who had denied him admittance to a play acted at Court, the house being full. 'Other reasons are guessed,' for 'a L^d Chamberlain was never before turned out for striking a yeoman of the guard.' April 25,
1675.

The grand manners of the courtiers are offensive to the plain country gentlemen, and this little bit of gossip is much appreciated: 'y^e Duke of Somerset visitinge Ambassador

Aug. 30,
1675.

Berkeley, he rec^d him wth great State keepinge his chaire of State wth his hatt on; y^e Duke in his returne meets wth the Earle of Shrewsbury, going to Berkley to whom my L^d relatinge his reception said, he w^d be even wth him who on approaching was rec^d after y^e same manner (viz wth out calling for a seat or being spoken unto to putt on his hatt) but he reach't his owne seat, putt on his hat, & sate close to him, wⁿ he tooke his leave, Berkely told him he had affronted him. Shrewsbury answered y^t he knew how to treat him in his publiq & private station, & y^t he might know y^t at home, he was a better man than himselfe.' The chief foreign news is the death of the great French general 'by a cannon shot from an ambuscade.' 'The French King says little but Jesus Maria, & beats his breast, wch when he observes any to take notice on it, he then laments the loss of his dear friend Turenne.'

Feb. 19,
1673.

In 1673 there is a brief reference to the break-up of a very happy home. 'Just now Sr Nathaniell Hobart died, & doubtlesse hee is a Blessed Saint in Heaven.' Sir Ralph was Lady Hobart's chief stay during her husband's very painful illness, and in all her mourning. He writes again: 'Our Deare friend Sr Nathaniell was decently buried on Satterday at 10 in the night, in the Temple Church, none were invited, but the houre being knowne, many of his friendes came to attend him to his grave.'

July 6,
1675.

Before long he is called upon to comfort one still dearer to him. 'This morning it pleased Almighty God to call to his mercy the soule of my good Aunt Denton, to the greate griefe of my deare Uncle Dr & all that knew her. Shee died in a good old Age, without any paine, or sicknesse, & had her senses to the last or very neare her last.' Katherine Denton was buried 'in the chancell of St. Margaret's Westminster,' possibly in a vault belonging to her first husband's family, where a monument to John Birt (or Bert), Protonotary of the King's Palace, 1638, is described by Stow.

The Rev. Edward Butterfield continued his labours as rector of Middle Claydon, aided in his declining years by his

son William, who, after spending five years at Oxford, left with an M.A. degree and was ordained by the Bishop, Dr. Compton, in 1675. On his father's death in 1678, he applied to Sir Ralph for the living, who returned him a 'doubtful answer,' desiring first to see him married. William Butterfield was a youth singularly amenable to good advice. Having no preferences, he consulted the patron as to a suitable partner, and Sir Ralph recommended Mistress Sarah Lovett, 'A Person of that Excellent Form, and Wit and Family as to command the greatest admiration and esteem.' Edmund Verney, who took a kindly interest in the young parson, writes: 'Mr. Will: Butterfield Goes A Woeing Jan. 2, 1679. Might & Mayne to Mrs Lovet: Hee expects a New Hatt to morrow from London, soe Hee would have putt of his journey to His Amata untill that came; but I offered to Lend him Myne, for that Delayes were Dangerous, & this Morn^g He intended for Ethrop without a new one, Myne not fitting him.' He was tossed about like a shuttlecock, between Father Lovett—who would only promise him his daughter when he should be Rector of Claydon—and Sir Ralph, who would think about it after, but not before, his marriage. He was a good deal bewildered, and never quite understood how he finally came to acquire both the living and 'my now dear Wife,' but he was clear that had he consulted his own wishes he would neither have been ordained nor married. There is a droll pathos in the situation; but William Butterfield fulfilled both vows as an honourable man, and inherited his father's popularity at Claydon.

There was a good deal of paternal government in the cottages, carried out by squire and parson, with a firm but kindly hand. We get glimpses of the village life in Edmund's letters to Sir Ralph.

'Last Satterday Night There Beffell a most sadd and lamentable Accident unto yr Tenant William Taylour, His House is Burnt Downe to the Ground and very little saved that was in it. He Hadd a Calf and a Cow Burnt, this Mischance Happened by Heating of their oven as They Jan. 29, 1677.

conceive. I sent my Man Wood This morning to see in what condition They are, and his children have never a rag to cover them. I sent them in my Cart a ffull Barrell of Beare & Gave Them my Barrell also. This misfortune makes me Apprehend some Mischeif from our Church House, wherein There are ffoure ffamilies That make ffires without a Chimney against wattled walls only Daubed over with Mortar, There is one Common Chimney in the sayd House, but None of Them will use it, because Every One will Be private: yet my ffather-in-law Abell made Them use ffire no where but in their common Chimney, when There were as many ffamilies in the Churchhouse as there are now. This Church or Wake House stands upon Ground Given to y^e Church, and thereare 4 or 5 Lands in y^e ffield without Common Given to repaire it, Let for about five Nobles a yeare, all w^{ch} is in the Disposall of the Church Wardens, but I Beleive They Do misapply that income to save Their Purses so farr as t'will go from Releiving the Poore: and That is the Reason that the very House is so much Decayed, through their willfull Neglect. . . . They suffer the now Dwellers to Do what They please to the great Hazard and Danger of Taking ffire.'

One of Edmund's men sends him 'some very good lace' which his daughter has made. He gives the lace-worker a guinea, Betty 'makes it up into a cravatt' of the new mode, and he intends to 'make himself fine with it at Christmasse.'

Edmund rejoices in the detection of the 'Cooper who hath stole a greate many of the best Pales from Sr William Smith's Park, to make Coopery ware,' and of other sturdy vagabonds, 'who come with Dogg & Gunne, Perching, Poching & killing Pheasants in y^r Woods & mine. Sir John Busby told me How He committed one Smith of Oakely to the Goale. Twas He that cheated young John Hicks. He is a Very Rogue I believe but whether any thing can be proved against Him sufficient to Hang Him Time must Try, it is sayd That He Hath maliciously Killed a World of Cattle & perticularly above 100 Cowes in the Oakely Parish

where He Dwelt with one Eustace a Butcher There, who divided the advantage thereby with Him : it is Reported He Hath stollen Horses too.' The rough justice the squires administered sounds harsh to us, but when a servant of Edmund's is ill he can always command 'the best the house can afford' ; at East Claydon a sick man is moved into the guest-chamber in order to have a fire. In London his foot-boy 'Dick is ffallen sick, and in all liklyhood will Have the smale Pox, I sent Him out of this House yesterday in a Chayre (& that a Sedan) to a Good Nurse-keeper who Tended my Lady Gardiner's Children : my uncle Doctor Denton Hath Been with Him and is his Physitian, if He were my owne Child I could do no more for Him, He shal want for Nothing.'

Sir Ralph takes a deep interest in his little grandsons, and keeps one of Ralph's first letters, endorsing it 'from Little Master with a basket,' when the child sends his 'humble dutys' and 'A few Puddins.'

Mun consults him about their schooling. Ralph is at Mr. Blackwell's school at Bicester.

'I went unto Water Stratford unto one Mr Masons House Feb. 18,
the Minister and Schoole Master There, to see what accom- 1678.
modation There was for my Boy Mun in case I put Him There to Schoole, my Man Wood's Mother dwells There at present, and if I send Him Thither, He is to Lye with Her in a Roome good Enough over the Kitchen : all w^{ch} I like very well, for shee is a good Discreet Woman and says she will Be mighty Carefull of Him : I like as well Mr Mason Himselfe who seemes to Be a very good conscientious Man and Scholar Enough, his Termes are but 12^l. pr Annum w^{ch} is a 4th part Lesse then Mr Blackwells. But somewhere by the Grace of God I do firmly Resolve to put out my Boy Mun, and we Have good Schoolemasters Enough about us, viz. Mr Blackwell at Bicester, Mr Rocheford at Addington, Mr Mason at Water Stratford, and Mr Amand at Thorneton who writes an admirable Hand as I am told, All w^{ch} I Name unto you Desiring yr Opinion w^{ch} of all These you Like Best and I will put Him There.'

Mun junior is eventually sent to join his brother; but Mr. Blackwell is often ill, when 'the gentleman-boarders straggle' at their pleasure, and finally Ralph desires to come home, as they have measles in the school, and small-pox in the house next to them. 'Go, tell my boy Ralph, he should not be afraid, for that's pusillanimity,' but though Dover carried this tonic message, Edmund confesses that he cannot keep his boys 'very long at these schools,' and wishes he had 'the Donation of our Vicarage,' 'to Gratify some Poore sober young Schollar that would very carefully Looke to my sonnes, and Industiously instruct Them in Learning and Vertu.'

Of the public schools he puts Winchester first, but, for its distance from Claydon, Eton next, and Westminster last, because it is in London. Harrow is not mentioned, though Dr. Denton's grandson is there, preparing for Oxford.

Dec. 29,
1679.

'This day dining at my Sister Gardiner's,' writes Sir Ralph, 'I met with Mr. Burrell, & Finding him to bee a discret young Man, about 20 yeares old, I examined him about Eaton Schole (hee being of the Foundation), if you resolve to send your Eldest sonn thether, (if Mr. Burrell bee not sped to Cambridg,) I thinke he is a very fit Man to take care of your sonn there; but my oppinion is to send him into France, (with a sober, discret Governour,) rather then into any schole in England, God direct you for the Best. . . . I have now sent you a Weekes Preparation for the Sacrament tis very short & very good, I bought Three, one for you, another for your Brother, & the Third for my selfe.' Edmund, whose own education had been carried on in France, Italy, and the Low Countries, considered that the acquisition of modern languages, and of a certain polish, were too dearly purchased by giving up the advantages of educating a boy in England.

Ralph at sixteen is to go to Winchester. He is to live in the College; the outfit required is large, and 'Gentlemen Commoners wear very costly gownes'; 'Kersey's Arithmetic' is one of his books. Edmund had settled to take him: 'My Boy Ralph having lost his ague, keepest a great

deale of Begging at me to go on Horseback, pretending that he is alwaies sick in a Coach.' So the father and son ride from Claydon to Winchester with two servants on horseback. Ralph seems to have been there only two terms, when his father wrote as follows to the Headmaster, whose name is unfortunately not given on the copy kept of the letter:

'Sir, I Received yr Civill Letter, for w^{ch} I Returne you my Very Hearty Thankes, as also for yr paynes about my Sonne & care of Him: I Didd ffully Intend to send Him Back to you (or Mr Usher which of you I know not) But Hearing you Gave a very Ill Character of Him Here before a great deale of Company at Table openly at London, Since he left Winchester I Didd not Think it Decent in me to Trouble so accomlisht a Gentleman as you are nor y^r Schoole with such a Block Head any more, for I Know ffull well, that Ex quorvis Ligno non flit Mercurius, and am sorry that my Sonne should Be composed of such substance that nothing can shape Him for a Schollar. But it is his ffault and None But His, and the worst wilbe his owne at long Runne, for William of Wickham's ffoundation is I Beleive the Best Nursery of Learning for young Children in the World, and perhaps never was Better provided with abler Teachers then now at this present, yr selfe for a Master, Mr. Home for an Usher and Mr Terry for a Tutor. I Have another Sonne, whom I Ever Designed for Winchester also. I Do not Despayre But That He may Regaine the lost Reputation of his Brother, But untill the ill impression w^{ch} my Eldest Hath Left Behind Him in Winton Be utterly craced and Worne out, I am ashamed to send Him Least the impression should prove a disadvantage to Him in yr Schoole. I understand that my worthy ffreind D^r Sherrock Hath payd All my Sonne's scores within and without the Colledge in Winchester. I pray Deliver this Enclosed Letter from my Sonne to Mr Terry his Tutor and you will oblige yr Humble Servant Edmund Verney. . . . Things may (I hope) Be so cleared that his Brother may appeare There with Credit and Honor Hereafter: if I should send Him.' Ralph's note to his tutor does not suggest that he

Sept. 5,
1682.

considered himself in disgrace: he writes affably as one gentleman to another, and makes a present to Mr. Terry of his green carpet. Mun was probably writing under 'the horrible smart' from a bad leg which tormented him in later years, for he shows as much irritability to little Mun, who had just earned for himself the title of 'as goode a childe as can be' after a visit to his grandfather.

'Childe, I Received a Letter from yr Master Mr Blackwell, who complaines of you in yr Businesse, & That you are Idely & Evilly inclined, and particularly That you jointly with some other, as Badd as yr selfe, Have lately Mischeifed a Tablet or two of his, and That you Rise in the Nights which was made to Rest and Sleepe in . . . you Have much Deceived me, yr ffather, who Blinded with Love to you, Thought you no lesse then a young Saint, But now to my Greife perceive, That you are Growing very fast to Be an old Devill.' He 'designes forthwith to choose a place for him of extreme severity such as he had never felt nor seen'; a threat which fell lightly on this hardened offender, who doted upon his father, and infinitely preferred his wrath and bluster to Mr. Blackwell's favours.

Mun is anxious to get Molly away from so sad a home, much as he will miss her, and at eight years old he takes her with him to London. 'Tomorrow I intend to carry my Girle to Schoole, after I have showd her Bartholomew Fayre & the Tombs & when I have visited her & a little wonted her to the place, I'll come home.' She goes to 'Mrs. Priest's school at Great Chelsey,' in Mrs. John Verney's chariot with her father, aunt, and brother. She learns to dance gracefully and 'to Japan boxes,' but more solid acquirements seem to be wholly left to Mrs. Priest's discretion. To Molly he writes: 'I find you have a desire to learn to Jappan, as you call it, and I approve of it; and so I shall of any thing that is Good & Virtuous, therefore learn in God's name all Good Things, & I will willingly be at the Charge so farr as I am able—tho' They come from Japan & from never so farr & Looke of an Indian Hue & Odour, for I admire all accomplishments that will render you considerable & Lovely

in the sight of God & man ; & therefore I hope you performe
y^r Part according to y^r word & employ y^r time well, & so I
pray God blesse you.' To learn this art 'costs a Guiney
entrance & some 40s. more to buy materials to work upon.'
Edmund hopes to put her later into the household of a lady
of quality, paying her board and giving her a maid, and then
to marry her to a country squire of good character and
moderate income ; and he can imagine for his little Molly
no happier fate,

CHAPTER XLIX.

UNDER THE MERRY MONARCH.

1675-1683.

THE reign of Charles II. was pre-eminently an age of hospitality. It was—on the surface at all events—a time of coarse wit and loud laughter, of clever talk, of dancing, duelling, dining, theatre-going, card-playing, and horse-racing, and of amusement raised to the dignity of a fine art.

England was said to suffer more from the King's virtues than from his vices, because his perfect manners made self-indulgence 'appear a part of good breeding, and essential to charm.' Not all the King's lieges stopped short, as he did, of excessive drinking and ruinous gambling. Dr. Osmund Airy, whose intimacy with Charles II. is unquestioned, challenges this statement in the first edition. 'I really cannot allow that incomparable Prince,' he writes, 'to be shorn of any of his accomplishments. I do not think he was very often drunk before the Restoration; but certainly after that he displayed what Mr. Weller called "very considerable powers of suction" with the usual effects.'

April 20,
1676.

This is Dr. Denton's account of 'Beauish Pembroke's' dinner party; he was Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire and a favourite at Whitehall. 'James Herbert lost his cause. Pembroke treated ye Jury, where every one was affraid to sitt next to him, but att last S^r ffr: Vincent did, my Ld began a small health of 2 bottles, w^{ch} S^r ffr refusinge to pledge, dashed wth a bottle att his head, & as it is said broke it, they beinge parted S^r ffr was gettinge into a coach & alarm arisinge y^t my Ld was cominge wth his sworde drawne, S^r ffr refused to enter, sayinge he was never afraid of a naked

sword in his life, & come he did, & at a passe my Ld brake his sword, att w^{ch} S^r ffr Cryed he scorned to take ye advantage, & then threw away his owne sword & flew att him furiously, beate him, threw him downe in ye kennell, nubbled him & dawb'd him daintily & soe were parted. A footman of my Lds followed mischeivously S^r ffr into a boat & him S^r ffr threw into the Thames, two more were cominge wth like intentions, but some red coats knowinge S^r ffr., drew in his defence & I heare noe more of it.' A little later 'My Ld Pembroke being in a Balcony in the hay-market with other Gentⁿ, some Blades pass^d by and fired at him but mist him & kill^d another.'

A still more outrageous scene is enacted in the room of a lady of quality. 'Two exchange women (to whom Lady Mohun owed a bill, and to whom payment was promised with Michaelmas rents, wth w^{ch} they seemed satisfied,) after drinking brandy, came with 4 braves to my Lord's lodgings: the women went up, spit in my lady's face &c. the men staid below and cried where is my L^d &c. My Lord at this alarm went upstairs, took his sword & pistol & one of his men the like, and after some passes, shot, miss'd the man but shot thro' his hat; that not doing shot again, but the pistol would not go off: the hubbub increasing they retreated, my lord having rec^d a slight wound on his hand; they were 3 Irish & one lifeguardsman.' The guardsman, when wanted by justice, is screened by his officers, though perfectly well known ('one Sutton of Laxington's family'), and takes occasion to beat Lord Mohun's footman next time he meets him. My Lord himself dies of a wound received in a duel the following year.

Oct. 5,
1676.

Sir Ralph rejoices that a tax of twopence a quart is put on wine to pay the King's debts, 'for if the People have noe Minde to pay this Tax, let them bee drunke with Ale and strong Beere. I beleeve Brandy will be forbid, or see greate a Tax Layd on it that none will import it: for since Labouring men have got a Trick of drinking Brandy, tis evident it hath hindred the Brewing of many hundred thousand quarters of Mault in England'

March 11,
1675.

'The Citizens are most noble feasters.' John describes the 'Great Wedding made by y^e Widdow Morisco for her Eldest daughter (who had 10, or 11,000^e portion) married to Aldⁿ Fredericks son & kept at Drapers Hall, the first day there were 600 dishes, & the second & third dayes were alsoe great feasting at ye same charge, And then S^r J^{no} frederick entertained them with 400 dishes, And this day the six Bridemen (for so many there were & six bridemaydes) Entertaine the company. . . . Today is another great Wedding kept at Coopers hall, between Kistings son, & Dashwood (the Brewers daughter) both Anabaptists, I intend to be there in ye evening.'

March 18,
1675.

Child marriages, with consent of parents, are still solemnised; Sir Ralph speaks of 'a young Wedding between Lady Grace Grenville, & S^r George Cartwright's Grandson, which was consummated on Tuesday by the Bishopp of Durham; she is 6 yeares old and hee a little above 8 yeares old, therfore questionlesse they will carry themselves very Gravely & Love dearly.' . . . 'The E. of Litchfield is married to the Dutchess of Cleveland's daughter, who is 11 years old, & the Earl 12.' Sir Ralph is his trustee.

Sir Ralph hears that 'The Kinge is soe delighted with his jorney to nuemarkett, and with the sport a saw there that a is ressoveld to spend the mounth of March att that place and for his better incouradgm^t divers persons of quality did make afore their breaking upp severall maches to bee runn att that time.' Dr. Denton describes the amusements that had been so congenial to Royalty: 'Neighbour Digby did uppon a wager of 50*l*. undertake to walk (not to run a step) 5 miles on Newmarkett course in an houre, but he lost it by half a minute, but he had y^e honor of good company y^e Kinge & all his nobles to attend & see him doe it stark naked (save for a loin-cloth) & barefoot,' and he adds that 'the Queen, for a joke, in a disguise rid behind one to Newport (I thinke Faire) neare Audley Inne to buy a paire of stockins for her sweethart; y^e Dutchesse of Monmouth, S^r Barnard Gascoigne & others were her comrads. Kate

Oct. 13,
1670.

Tate is married to a man of 3,000*l.* pr Ann: Y^e Queen sent me word y^t she did it to justify y^e Sultan.'

Mun writes: 'The King & the jockeys met at supper at Nov. 23,
Ned Griffin's where were made 6 hare-matches for 500*l.* a 1676.
match, to be run at Newmarket next meeting.' On another
occasion the King 'has been hawking in Bucks, but walked
soe much, he took cold thereon, soe that he fell ill that very Aug. 23,
night & was unwilling to be blouded, but severall Physicians 1679.
coming from town persuaded him to it & likewise to take
some Manna . . . he is now said to be pretty well again,
which God grant.'

Ursula Stewkeley illustrates the manners of a fast young May 4,
lady of the period. Cary writes to Sir Ralph, her husband 1674.
being in London: 'I wish he had stayed at home, Bot yr
sex will follow yr Enclynations w^{ch} is not for women's
convenineys. I should bee more contented if his daughter
Ursula ware not heare, who after 8 months plesure came
homb unsatisfied, declaring Preshaw was never so irksome
to her, & now hath bin at all the Salsbury rasis, dancing
like wild with Mr. Clarks whom Jack can give you a carictor
of, & came home of a Saturday night just before our Winton
rasis, at neer 12 a clok when my famly was a bed, with
Mr. Charls Torner (a man I know not, Judg Torner's son,
who was tryed for his life last November for killing a man,
one of the numbar that stils themselves Tiborn Club), And
Mr. Clark's brother, who sat up 2 nights till neer 3 a Clok,
& said, shee had never bin in bed sine shee went a way till
4 in the morning, & danced some nights till 7 in the Morning.
Then shee borrowed a coach & went to our rasis, & wod
have got dancars if shee could, then brought homb this crue
with her a gaine, & sat up the same time. All this has
sophytiently vexed me. her father was 6 days of this time
from home, & lay out 3 nights of it, & fryday shee was brought
home & brought with her Mr. Torner's linin to be mended
& washed heare & sent after him to London, where he went
on Saturday, to see how his brother Mun is come of his
tryall for killing a man just before the last sircut, And sine
these ware gone I reflecting on thes actions, & shee declaring

she could not be pleased without dancing 12 hours in the 24, & takeing it ill I denied in my husband's absenc to have 7 ranting fellows come to Preshaw & bring musick, was very angry & had ordered wher they should all ly, shee designed mee to ly with Peg G, & I scaring her, & contrydicting her, we had a great quorill.'

Mr. Stewkeley was detained at Winchester with Captain Norton, 'for a gentleman of the B^{ps} came to us in our Inne and Invited us to a pasty of venison w^{ch} stayd us untill past 3 aclock,' but on his return, 'after a long absence the more welcome,' he devises some private theatricals as a safer outlet for the girls' energies. He writes to Sir Ralph: 'Wee had a Diversion here wch was very acceptable to the Ladyes wee Invited, and after that a Collation: to morrow Lady Vaughan [Rachel, afterwards Lady Russell], Lady Noel and theire Husbands wth other company will bee here, this is a much cheaper way than to have theire company severally, and more obliging, and there were no fewer than 30 the other day of Gentry; and the like number wee expect to morrow, besides attendants. I did take out of the play what I thought a little immodest & Impertinent, and the Spectators had almost putt them out wth commending them so loud, as they were acting: Carolin being but 14 did act a prince's part (wch is a very long one about 300 lines) beyond all their expectations, and Cary and Pen did theire parts very well, and Peg Gardiner and Ury who acted Harris and Batterson's parts in that play came off with great applause and all wth as little prompting as ever I observed at the Theater, and I think it very unusuall to have it performed in our family. Yr sister and I are more delighted then wee would make shew of, for I am sure without Ingenuity and good memoryes they could not do it so well.'

The disorderly state of the London streets is constantly referred to. In the winter of 1670 Dr. Denton relates that 'betweene 7 & 8 aclock, 5 or more horsmen dogd ye Duke of Ormond, who went home by ye way of Pal-mal & soe up James' Street & just as his coach came to ye upper end thereof, on of them clapt a pistoll to his coachman y^t if

eyther he spoke or drove he was a dead man, the rest alighted & comanded him out of y^e coach; he told them y^t if it were his money they should have it, soe they puld him out of y^e coach, foret him on hors back behind one of them, & away they carried him, my L^d havinge recollected himself y^t he had gone about 30 paces as he ghessed (& as he told me himself for I went yesterday morninge to see him) & finding he was hinmost, his foreman havinge his sword & bridle in one hand, & his pistoll in y^e other wrested ye pistoll out of his hand, & threw y^e fellow downe, fell with him & upon him, & gott his sword & gott loose of them not wth out some other hazards, one pistoll beinge shott att him & two more fired. He is bruised in his ey, & a knock over the pate wth a pistoll as he ghessed, & a small cutt in his head, after all w^{ch} he is like I thank God to doe well. This makes all ye towne wonder, if money had beene their designe they might have had it, if his life, they might have had y^t alsoe. Some think & conjecture only, y^t their malice & spite was such y^t they would have carried him to Tiburne, & have hanged him there. They cannot Imagine whom to suspect for it. The horse they left behind. It was a chestnutt, wth a bald face, & a white spott on his side. He y^t was dismounted gott off in y^e dark & crowd.' Dr. Denton reminds Sir Ralph, 'if Ormond do chance to come to you a byled leg of mutton is his beloved dish for dinner.' Sir Ralph Sydenham is known as 'the man that loves barley broth.'

Mr. St. Amand is attacked in his coach between Knightsbridge and Hyde Park Gate, robbed of two guineas, some silver, and his periwig, and so much injured that prayers are desired for him in Covent Garden Church, where his assailants may well have formed part of the congregation.

Tom Danby, who had married Margaret Eure, was killed about this time in a London tavern 'by one Burrage, an affront at least, if not his death,' being planned beforehand. Mun Temple in a similar brawl was knocked on the head with a bottle, and died of his injuries. Sir Ralph had to use all his interest to save Will Stewkeley from the consequences of a drunken quarrel in which a man was

Aug 30,
1675.

murdered, though not by his hand, and he had to retire to Paris for a time. Duels are of daily occurrence: John's letters to Mun are full of them. Mr. Scrope, sitting by Sir Thos. Armstrong at the Duke's playhouse, struck him over the shins twice; both men wished to speak to 'Mrs. Uphill, a player, who came into the house masked. The gentlemen round made a ring, and they fought, Sir Thomas killed Scrope at the first pass; not the first man he had killed, said the bystanders.' The sudden quarrels between intimate friends that end fatally are most startling. Sir William

Nov. 1683. Kingsmill's cousin, Mr. Hazelwood, 'came of a visit to see him, they fell out, & it ended in y^e death of Mr. Hazelwood, nobody was by but only them two; tis to be hoped y^t his sister being at Court may help to save his life.'

Oct. 24,
1683.

Nancy Nicholas relates how three young men who were friends—'Mr Teret (ye son of a ship captin), Mr Foster (S^r Hum: Foster's brother), & Mr Coney, maid an agreement y^t w^{ch} ever of y^m first married, shuld pay to ye other two 200[£] a pece; now Teret was latly married & these 2 others came for their money, w^{ch} he would have railed y^m out of, but at last it came to blos, ye seconds was Mr O'Brian & Mr Dean, Teret & Foster both dead upon ye plaice, y^e other 4 wounded.'

Lord Cavendish and Mr. Howard disagree about some proceedings in the House; Lord Cavendish sends a challenge which Mr. Howard, being sick of the gout, cannot take up at once, and my lord posts him at Whitehall Gate for a coward and a rascal; it needed the combined efforts of King, Lords, and Commons to put an end to this absurd quarrel. Young Lord Gerard, aged fourteen, takes his mother to see New Bedlam; the drunken porter and his wife are insolent to him, whereupon the lad draws his sword and 'runs the porter into the groin'; the rabble fall upon Lord Gerard and nearly pull him to pieces, thrust him into prison, and then break the windows to come at him again. The Lord Mayor rescues him and shelters him in his house all night. Meanwhile the Countess of Bath driving past 'has her coach broke to bits & her footman knocked down, being taken for

Lord Gerard's Mother.' The plucky boy rouses one's sympathy, but there are worse stories than these.

John Verney writes of Cornet Wroth, who dined with Sir Robert Viner at his country-house, 'and after dinner going an airing with him, drew a pistol on his host, and having six or eight troopers to assist him, carried off Miss Hyde in a coach, a wheel broke and he laid her across a horse, and rode off to Putney ferry where he had a coach and six; the country was roused and the girl was recovered speechless, but the gallant Cornet escaped.' Some of the doings are tragic, some merely foolish. John tells Mun how 'a Quarrell happened at Islington Wells, and swords were drawn, but noe blood, & indeed the falling out between 2 friends was soe silly, that it lookt like an agreement between 'em beforehand. I was present at the sport, which happened in a room where were at least 30 Ladyes very much frightend & most of 'em underfoote, soe that there was fine squeeking and squeeling for a minute or two.' Edmund relates 'a pleasant Passage that Happened t'other day in Barkshire: viz my Ld. Ch. Just: Scroggs Being upon the Roade in his Coach, two Gentlemen on Horseback overtooke Him, and perceiving Him a sleepe, One of Them sayd to the Other I will Rowse Him with a Trick: and so Having Such a Baston in his hand as I use to Ride with, smote the Toppe of his Coach with it mighty Violently, & Cryed out with a Loud Voyce A Wake Man severall Times, and so Galloped away with speed.'

There were problems enough to occupy the minds of thoughtful men; the price of food was rising, and the poor were sinking into deeper poverty. Sir Matthew Hale, amongst others, was occupied with a scheme for giving work to the unemployed, when he died on Christmas Day, 1676. Edmund writes: 'That incomparably Learned & ^{Jan. 4,} upright Man & Just, Judge Hales it seems is dead to us, ^{1677.} & gone without question unto a better Place, though He will be more missed then any man in England except His Majesty, for he hath not left his fellow behind him. Therefore I cannot choose, but condole a Losse so con-

siderable & universall to my Country, for the Newcastle Duke & Lady Duras & Latimer's still-born sonne, They are nothing to you or I, or any Body Else besides a few private friends of their owne. My Cosen Greenfield of Wotton I heare is Dying also & that signifies as little, & so the death of Cuff Emerson is as inconsiderable, he was father to young Mistress Hide's husband & lately died of the small-pox.'

Jan. 3,
1677.

'Heere are 2 or 3 stories,' Sir Ralph writes, 'about Judge Hales foretelling the time of his Death; in the maine, I beleeve them true, but the circumstances are told variously, & are too long for a letter, . . .' 'I am persuaded,' Mun replies, 'that such an excellent vertuous Man as Honest Judge Hales might have the spirit of Prophecie given him, to prophecie anything according to the Analogie of faith.'

Aug. 30,
1677.

In the summer of 1677 Mun was seriously ill in London; as soon as he could be moved he went with Sir Ralph and John to the Stewkeleys. 'Preshaw Ho. puts me in mind of the loaves & fishes,' writes Dr. Denton, 'it increases & Multiplies with the company.' Lady Smith had arrived with two daughters, a chaplain, two maids, three in livery, and six horses; 'if rightly informed there was but one guest-chamber & how to provide roome for 65 is next to Miracilous. I doubt not of the mirth & entertainment, but I am sure I could not be contentedly merry in any crowd.' Lady Gardiner is so happy in the good company of her brother and his sons, 'which made up a most pleasant harmony,' that when they leave her, she writes: 'Our naighbours lament our soden chang, for all heare looks like the novesis when thay put of ther gorgeous cloths, and put on ther nun's habits.' Sir Roger wrote one of his affectionate letters, inviting Sir Ralph and his sons 'once more to come together & visit poore Wroxall, where I think to spend a good part of the next summer if we are not by some cross providence prevented; he was staying with Daughter Guyon at Yeldham on his way to Sutton for the winter. He is very unhappy at the conduct of public

Aug. 20,
1677.

affairs, which has left 'the enemie at liberty to come & cut our throats at our very doors.'

Shortly after came a letter to Sir Ralph from Dr. Henry Paman of St. John's, Cambridge: 'Sir, you had rec^d from me the sad newes of dear Sir Roger Burgoyne's death . . . but I was not very willing to speake of my owne sorrow for soe great a losse. If anything could have given him courage enough to live, it was the seeing of Dr. Denton, who came by chance, but hee thought him sent immediately from Heaven & was extremely pleased to see him. He did very often in his sickness entertain me with discourse of you, & how excellent a friend he had in all occasions found you.' Dr. Denton had called in on his way from Ely, and found his old friend in 'a world of danger,' 'he is very earnest with me not to leave him, I told him I durst not for feare you would never forgive me if I did.' He writes to Sir Ralph again, that Sir Roger died on the 16th, having taken to his bed ten days before: 'his first care was that you might know it & noe man so much in his thoughts as you, with the kindest expressions & acknowledgments imaginable.' The good old man had long described himself as 'a Tattered Vessell'; his eldest son had made a happy marriage with Constance Lucy of Charlecote, his affairs were in order, and in these last days he spoke of himself as 'Well, very well, only weak.' 'If I should doubt his happiness,' the Doctor wrote, 'I know not whose I should be confident of.' The old Doctor himself had been wildly imprudent. His health had not been 'current of late.' 'I gott noe good att Sturbridge Faire by oysters, fresh herrings, varieties of wine & beäre, the same befell Sir Roger as they say, as likewise to his father also before him.'

Sept. 25,
1677.

Sept. 18,
1677.

Through all the convulsions of the State Sir Roger had kept the even tenor of his way, sympathising with popular progress, and for himself, content to do the duty next at hand with all his might. 'I envye not the highest cedars, but am content to be a shrubbe, valueing much more safety than the greatest honour, for cottages may stand when pallasess fall.' Sir Ralph spoke of him as 'the joy and

comfort of his friends and Family, and certainly the best husband, the best father, and the best friende in the world.' Sir John Burgoyne begs Sir Ralph to accept of cloth for a mourning suit, and to order it of Mr. Lovell at the Cock in Bedford Street. Sir Ralph is not pleased: 'this seemes a little Odd to me, that I must send for it, certainly the custome is to send it to one's owne house, or Lodging, I am sure I never knew it otherwise, nor shall I send for it, nor take any notice of it in my answare to his letter.'

The last office of friendship which Sir Ralph can perform for Sir Roger is to design the monument which the widow wishes to put up over the family pew in Sutton Church. He gives the matter his most careful attention, and entrusts the work to Grinling Gibbons, whose signature and seal are appended to the specification. Sir Peter Lely, Kt., and Hugh May, Esquire, are to decide, when the monument is complete, whether 100*l.* or 120*l.* should be paid for it, but the payment is not in any case to exceed the latter sum, 'the overvalue being for the credit of the said Greenlin Gibbons at his own offer'—which sounds more like the deed of a generous artist than of a man of business.

In a letter of Sir Ralph's to John there is a touching reference to the anniversary of the battle of Edgehill: 'You know that to morrow senite is the 23. October, & how I keepe that day, therfore were you now heere, I canot begin my Jorney till that day is over.'

Oct. 25,
1677.

A new figure appears in the letters this autumn; William of Orange arrives in England, and has been with the King at Newmarket; and with the Royalties 'incog. to the revels at Lincoln's Inn.' Dr. Denton writes: 'Ye match wth Lady Mary & ye Prince was Concluded last Sunday night; on Munday ye Councill, L^d Maior, &c went to congratulate her, & y^t night of Bells & Bonfires good store. . . . Dr Lloyd of St. Martins goes wth Lady Mary for some few months to settle her chappell. A Greeke church hath beene long a buildinge in St. Giles feilds, it goes on slowly.'

Oct. 25,
1677.

Lady Hobart writes: 'All the news hear is of the Lady Mary's mach; tis gret joy to all the sety & everybody. She

and Duck, Duchis and Lady Ann set and cry 2 or 3 houres together, thay ar loth to part.' The bells and bonfires were for the betrothal, the marriage itself took place on the 5th of November; the tears shed would have been bitter indeed, could any of the family party have foreseen that the bridegroom would invade his father-in-law's kingdom, on the anniversary of this joyful wedding day. Guy Fawkes' day was kept by the Verneys as 'gunpowder Jack's' birthday.

'We all remember ye date on the 5th inst.' Nancy ^{Nov. 7, 1677.} writes to him; 'our Prince of Oring behaved himself like a generall as well under his canopy of peace, as he doeth under y^t of war & is an active dancer on ye ropes, & his prety lady seemeth prety well plesed. Y^e formality of Maridg was performed by y^e Bp. of London, Sunday night 9 a klok.' The Prince would not tolerate the customs usual on such occasions, '& the Duke desired ye company all to withdraw.' Nancy considers that 'the Prince performed ye part of an able man for the honnor of the dutchmen,' but he was not popular in town. Society pronounced him to be 'the plainest man ever seen & of no fashion at all.'

The old jealousy of a standing army is warmly expressed, yet when troops are wanted for the war with France in 1678, Edmund writes: 'The Drums beat up last Saturday at March 18, Alesbury for Volontiers, but not a man came in to list, altho' ^{1678.} they might have been under [Capt.] Wisedome's conduct, whereby it playnely appears, the spirit of the nation is down, or elce we are not the Men we fancy ourselves to be, for I have heard Many say if we had war with the French that vast Multitudes would go against them, but for my part I see no such thing, if people in other parts of Eng^d are as backwards as in our Country & Wallingford where I myself frightened most of the young fry into Holes & Cellars, with only walking up & down the streets, being taken for a Presse-Master. If there is a shower of blood at Orleans, it is a sign of Much Effusion of Blood in France, those prodigies sent from Heaven never come in vaine.'

'I think Collonel Legg Hath made a good Choyce in

Craddock the Butcher for a Captaine in his Regiment. I know the Man and Have sene Him ffight Prizes, He is a stout Man and a Neat Gamester: when I am a Collonell I will also Choose my Master Druse a Gladiator of Alisbury, who Hath ffought with Craddock and Worsted Him, for one of my Captains.' He laments that 'the overflowing scum of our nation is listed' and that 'the better sort of Men will not come in voluntarily unless they like their officers very well. In Northamptonshire men come in pretty thick to be enrolled under Lords Brian & Peterborough. Capt. Wisdome can get none at Ailesbury but "Gaolbirds, thieves & rogues."'

Jan. 20,
1679.

Mun has no doubt that he could raise 'both Horse & Foot for his majestie's service as good men number for number as any he hath'; he is willing to serve 'provided he has his own terms not otherwise.' When the troops are paid off the following year there is still more discontent. 'The troopers of Buckingham were disbanded by Sir John Busby, Sir Harry Andrws, my old Cozen Stafford & Captain Lovett. My L^d Latimer was also there & the Troopers were extremely angry with him & swore they would never serve under him again, nor fight for King Charles & a many of them sayd they would robb, for home they durst not goe. The King & Dukes Guards 15 in number that passed & repassed here the other day carryed the money to pay them off. Theyr fire armes are sent up to London by one Webb a caryer.' The men are selling their 'very good buff belts for 18^d a peece.' 'I never remember this country so infested with rogues as it is now, last Thursday 3 or 4 of them stood with their swords drawne in my Ridge way wch leads to Buck^m, they were on foot yet very fine in apparell & had Cloakes . . . they meant to robb H. Scott's house but the market-folkes passing their hearts failed them. . . . I Heare Sr John Busby Doth ffancy Himselfe a great Commander, Having Gott two smale ffeild peices of about 3 inches Bore, wch were Sr Anthony Cope's, and are to be discharged often against Stow & Claydon: These are Thundering Peeeces of Mortality wch Do no wayes affright,

nor can possibly Daunt Yr most affectionate Kinesman & Servant, Edmund Verney.'

He makes some curious references to the Guards: 'I July 16,
wonder much How any One can Think, because I sayd ¹⁶⁷⁷
I would Have a sute à la soldate, that consequently I must
Be in the Kings Livery, wch He prescribes his Guardes to
weare, for my part if I were of Them, I should Hardly
weare it upon Duty, unlesse particularly commanded by his
Majesty, and Then I must obey especially if I Take his
Pay: for though I carry a souldiers Mind yet I Hate any
servile Badge, Neither Do I understand the Livery wch He
makes his peculiar Guardes weare, to Be the only Patterne
Becomming all other Souldiers to ffolow in their Habits, for
thats as Every One ffancys, so That There is no necessity
for the Generality of Martiall Men to ffall into such Extremes
as to Be in the Kings Guardes peculiar Livery, if they will
weare a Habit souldier like: and as There are Garbs par-
ticularly adapted unto a Souldiers Genius so likewise There
are sundry sorts of Habits becomming Souldiers in particular
& sic de simili: But for ffear my Taylour should want skill
How to distinguish the severall Differences, I will Direct
Him to make me a Hansom sute fitt for Winter & to
Appeare in any Christian seraglio. I intend to have two
Liverys like yrs, though I shall Travell but wth one, for
when I am Returned Home I Resolve to Bind Nedd
Smith Apprentice, Then I'll Keepe But Two Livery Ser-
vants, wch to Keepe in different Liverys were somewhat pre-
posterous.'

The allusion to the Scots Guards is still less respectful:
'The D: of Y: Hath Been Very unhappy to Himself & to Jan. 29,
These Nations: I wonder He should Desire the Scotch to ^{1680.}
Build a Church, for if I Mistake Them not, They are more
like to Pull Downe Churches then Build any: & I wonder
as much that He should desire a Scotch Guard for his
Person: Hath He fforgot How that People sold his most
Excellent ffather: and if He doth Remember that Peece of
Judasisme, can He imagine They will Be Truer to Him, if
He do, He Hath a Better ffaith in Them than I.'

July 16,
1677.

Sir Ralph tells Mun that he thought no gentleman would ever wear 'the habit of the Officers of the Guard, but now I heare a Baronet of Suffolk did last week wear it in Whitehall, which made soe greate a Laughter in the Court & at this End of the Towne that I beleeeve 'twill never bee done againe by any Man in this age. . . . You shall give me your picture in a Buff Coate, or in armour with all my heart, but not in a sute, like the Officers of the Guard.' Mun writes: 'I do not understand How the Granadiers can Doe any considerable Execution with fflying Hand Granadoes on Horseback, w^{ch} makes me wonder that his Majesty can Have so great a ffancy for that sort of souldiery.' 'I am sorry for the Poore Men that were drowned in y^e ffrench Man of War that lately Perisht, But I wish all this french Kings Ships at the Bottom of the Sea and Lost for ever.' English feeling had changed much since the enthusiastic welcome given to Madame: the country squires were sickened with the subserviency of the Court to Louis XIV. When Sir Ralph heard that the French army was saved 'from a total rout by the Imperialists,' by the valour of the English and Scotch in their service, he could only lament that 'they lost not theire lives in a cause more pleasing to the generality of theire owne Nation.'

July 30,
1679.

Nancy Nicholas tells a queer story as current about town: 'Our King sent people over to Calais,' and the King's corncutter went with them 'because he could speak French, and they bore his charges and gave him 2 guineas for his reward. So y^e French K satt at Dinner in a great room & y^e L^d Sunderland dynded att y^e table wth y^e K, & ye L^d duras & all English gentillmen satt at a nother table in y^e same room, wth great men of France y^t ware to be to enterten y^e beter sort of English; & y^e ordinery English men ware caried to y^e side table to drinke & all in y^e same roome wth y^e French K: a French man began ye K: of France's helth so ye Corn cutter he swore he would drinke his health for it was his own master's, for he was K: of En^d Fr: & Scot & Ierland, & he spoke it so loud y^t y^e K: heard, & asked who it was, & he had his bags on him & they said it was a buffon

of England, so yⁿ he took a glas of win & said he would begin a health & that, he said, was to ye King *in france*.'

Bucks shared with the rest of the Kingdom the excitement caused by Titus Oates' pretended discoveries, and an engraved stone at Oatlands that 'Oats shall save this land from destruction' was quoted by Edmund as containing a political prophecy rather than a simple agricultural fact. Sir Richard Temple disbelieved in Oates from the first, and was called a Jesuit for his pains. Edmund writes from East Claydon to John in London: 'I perceive by yours of the 20th That abundance of Rogues and Jades are condemned, and are like to suffer according to theyr Demerits: But for ye great Rogues, Jades and Traytors, w^{ch} Deserve Death Ten Thousand Times sooner then y^e Other, They are like to escape & be Pardoned, w^{ch} is a most sadd Thing to Consider upon. Lord Have Mercy upon Us for I wonder How all This will End, I am affrayd very ill.' 'Yesterday Oates Preacht in forster lane,' John writes, 'where were Greate Crowds of people, more to see then heare him, for some tell me his performance was not Extraordinary.' On November 5 in this year, besides his brother's health, Edmund drinks many loyal toasts to the confusion of Conspirators and Plotters. The Sessions in London were heavier than had been known for forty years, '20 men & 13 women being condemned to death.'

Oct. 23,
1679.

Oct. 27,
1679.

Nancy writes: 'We had maney bonfiers heare a boughts & at Tempel bar was burnt ye Lord Shafstbery & D^r Oats, & very unhappily I know not by what means it hapned but y^e mobele was very rud to y^e Dutch Imbasidor & his wife w^{ch} he did not expect shuld be shewed him on y^e 5: of Nov.' 'The Pop and S^r Edmond Godfery,' Cary writes, 'was carryed in greatare triumph then evar, from Whithall to Somarset hous on Qu. Elizabeth's coronation day, though wee all hard the King sent to my lord Maior to repres it, w^{ch} replied hee could not hope to due it, the people being fixed to due it, wod bee daingarous to sopres it; parsons of quollity went to see it as thay did my lord Maiors show, bot the pop was burnt at temple bar, and S^r Edmund Godfery

Nov. 20,
1679.

only carryed to Somarset hous, they say ther was 20,000 attended this show all day and expected to bee soprest by the gards and declared they wod stand on ther defenc but all was quiat. John writes that there were 100,000 spectators, and that the King witnessed the pageant from a goldsmith's window; that the devil appeared attended by boys in surplices, with a train of bishops, cardinals, and friars, with bell, book, and candle &c. 'On Queen Eliz^s birth night S^r Robert Peyton's Effigy will be burnt with the Pope's By the Rabble, On fryday y^e King walked to Hampton Court, & Portsmouth rode in her Coach by him.'

'It would Anger One strangely to consider unto what a ffayre Market of Destruction Wee are Brought, meerely through the Negligence, folly, unskillfullnesse & Basenesse of our Pilots, who neither would nor Could save the shipp from sinking and Perishing, notwithstanding They were admonished and Directed How to Do it in Time By the Voyce of the People.'

This very modern sentiment was Edmund Verney's comment on the results of the reign that began with such enthusiasm of popular approval. Yet in that age of paradoxes Charles II.'s personal popularity was never greater than during the last few years of his life. The reaction after the frenzied cruelties with which the Popish plot had been avenged, rendered vain Shaftesbury's desperate game to secure the throne for Monmouth; and strong Protestants, like the Verneys, wholly disapproved of the Exclusion Bill, while deploring the Duke of York's conversion to Rome. The King, who stood bravely by his brother in all his unpopularity, sent him abroad till the storm abated.

Edmund writes to Sir Ralph in the spring of '79: 'That y^r Distemper Should Leave you, & the Duke of York, England, much about the same Time, is a Mercy, w^{ch} makes mee Merrily & Trebly Sing, Gaudiamus and Haleluia, and I pray that the One be never suffered to Trouble you more, nor the other this Nation again, and so God Blesse our good King Charles, in whom I Hope There is no Guile.' But the Prince returns sooner than Sir Ralph's distemper: Cary

writes from London, 'In stead of the Duck's going for Oct. 13,
Scotland, hee with the doches and daughters Arived heare 1679.
last night, Dalavall denton who came with him told mee
when they left flanders all ther discours was for Scotland,
bot whilst the Duck was coursing on the sees, being tosed
with severall winds about, they met with letters from the
King to give leve to come this way, And you may esely ges
England is more plesent then Scotland, the doches exprees
exterordynary joy, she saith she hath not had a happy hour
since she went out of England. But to come to the sad
story of the tims, the Duck of Monmouth came to towne on
thursday about one a clok in the morning, and that night had
great bonfiars for joy, great numbers stoped coaches to get
mony, and hackneys, and maid them fling up ther hats and
say God bles Jaims duck of Monmouth, ele thay wod afront
them.' John tells how he was stopped in the streets, and
when he refused to give the crowd money to drink
Monmouth's health 'they cried out a Papist, a Papist. The Dec. 1,
L^d Mayor & Aldermen went to congratulate his Maj^{ties} re- 1679.
covery, the D. of York was by but they took no notice of
him, wch he resented; Tis said the K. took my L^d Mayor by
the hand & welcomed him, at wch my L^d M. took him by
the other hand & shaking both s^d I thank you, I thank you,
several times more.' Cary writes 'this great joy is not at
Whit hall bot as much angar, for the King will not see him
[Monmouth] but in his angar has taken a way all his plases:
isterday tis said hee had 200 visitants a great number of the
nobilyty. my lord Shusbury and lord hollofax I hard
named: tis beleved the great kindness the people shows him
maks the king hate him: and tis beleved thay that crys him
up dus it only in opposition to the Duck.'

'I sent my Girls to court last night to heare news,' Cary
writes again, 'wher ther was the greatest court on that
acount as has bin seen sine the plot begon, for usually ther
is very fue as I am told, but iching years carryed many to
heare the Duck of Monmouth's dome, w^{ch} most lamented,
and some said the duck of monmouth wept when he heard
the joy the people exprest, knowing it wod ruing him, the

say in court the King sent to him to bee gone on tuesday, bot the duck refueses to goe, on whot acount is severall wayes said : bot the girls tells mee the King looks so very ill as it greved them to see him, and came twice in, bot spok to none bot my lord Fevarsome who came in with him, thay nevar saw man have more discontent and disordar in the looks then the King had ; the Queen was brisk and looks well, the new master of the hors came in playing before the King.'

The panic of the Popish plot had made Catherine for a time unpopular. John Stewkeley wrote in June, when there was even a cry of sending her to the Tower: 'The Queen is the subject now of great consultation, whether for Portugal, or a closer place, or the continued favour of him that fears no colours nor is sensible of any Danger; but the Qu. shows herself in the Park & is very merry.'

Dec. 7,
1679.

'T'is a very Crasy Time everywhere,' Mun writes, 'Especially at London. The Duke of Monmouths Comming Back with such generall acclamation and joy & flocking of the People to see & congratulate Him, will Rouse up His Royall Highnesse to Hasten his Ruine, w^{ch} without a Rebellion can not be prevented in all Likelyhood: for His Majesty Hath determined y^e succession in the Duke of York, with much Reason in my thoughts: I am concerned to see Things Run so violently: But God's will must Be Done.' Amongst Monmouth's personal friends in Bucks was Sir William Smith, to whom he gave his picture; and with whose unstable character and ostentatious ways he had much in common. John writes that 'y^e D. of Monmouth was at S^t Martin's Church, when he came in all People shew'd him much Civility by rising up, and some Cry'd God blesse y^e Duke of Monmouth, I heard say that he then & there Receaved the holy sacrament.'

Dec. 7,
1679.

'My lord Gorg the duck of Monmoth's son being sick the King give him leve to goe see him, and sine his death the duck has leve to be wth the doches at the Cokpit, so many hops hee will come in favour againe, because you shall heare the nues of the towne as well as mee, true or fale, tis said

the duck of monmoth sent to the dochis of porchmouth to know why shee was his enymy so much, who answered him shee was so, and wod bee so as long as hee was an Enymy to the King and her, and that hee should find she should bee upheld by all the princes of chrisendome : a brave hicktoring lady ; tis said the parlament will set up the duck of Monmoth and will find witnesses to prove his Mother was maryed to the king, to show you the probabillyty of this tis said the Bisshop of Winchester is to bee one of the witnesses, this the Moltitude wod have, so will talk of it though thay ruing him thay love by it. The Dochis of porchmouth calls the parlament The 500 Clowns ; Nelly dus the Duck of Monmoth all the Kindness shee can, bot her interest is nothing.' 'Nell Gwin begg'd hard of his Maj^{tie} to see him, telling him he was grown pale, wan, lean & long-visaged merely because he was in disfavour ; but the King bid her be quiet for he w^d not see him.'

In the midst of the excitement about the Exclusion Bill, Oct. 20,
1680. Nancy Nicholas writes : ' This day our Great Duke Yorke, & his Dutches is gone for Scotland ; last saturday ye Lord Fairfax, Cousin Sherard's father in law, was walking in St Jeames Park & his hignes did se him & so came to him & took him by ye hand & said to him, Well my L^d I se you are all com up to doe what you can against me ; I am ye more sorry for y^e occasion, replied yt L^d, but we are all resolved to assert y^e properties of our nation & ye Prodistant Religion ; & His Royal Higness replyd again, I will give you all y^e asshurance you can ask y^t I will not disturb y^r propertie ; this I ame shuer is a real truth . . . tis said to-night y^t tis the Dutchis of Porchmouth y^t hath sent his hyness on this errant.' Cary hears that ' the Duck has a very full and gloryus court in Scotland, the Duck of Monmouth is at the cokpit, bot his dochis is ill, and has reson-to bee so for her estat is all drowned by waters in Scotland bot 5000^e a yeare, and all her fortunes sunk heare at present w^{ch} maks mee pity her exstremly.'

Nancy must have a story to tell Sir Ralph : ' This day in ye house of L^{ds} saith ye L^d Clarindon (by a wae of

whisper) to L^d Shafstbery—"my L^d we can never be well so long as y^t ill woman ye D. of Porchth is wth our K; so I hope you will give y^r helping hand to remove her;" "my L^d, my L^d," couth Shafstbery "we are now hunting Tygers & Bairs & Birds of Prey & now you would a Cony-Ketching." 'Edmund writes from London on December 30, of a noble quarry hunted to death by Shaftesbury, 'my Lord Stafford was beheaded yesterday & died like a Roman.'

Sir Ralph had been winding up his guardianship of the two charming Lee heiresses, Lady Rochester's granddaughters, who were nearly of age, Anne Mrs. Tom Wharton, and Eleanor Lady Norreys, afterwards Countess of Abingdon.

Sept. 8,
1673.

In the matter of Anne's marriage to Mr. Wharton Sir Ralph had taken a decided line against Charles II.; the young lady herself was said to prefer Mr. Arundel, who (as Cary Gardiner writes to her brother) 'has the favour of the King and the othar looked on of no good reputation, so tis said tis done in oposition to the King, who looks on my lady rochister as an ungratfull woman he having given her a good part of what this lady Injoys w^{ch} was forfeited by treson, and his sevarall favours to my lord rochister, who they report cursis her and the young lady and all that has maid this match, beleveing it will slaken the King's kindness to him: besids tis said Mr. Arendall has bin unhansomly delt with. A hondred things more is said, bot all I say I wish you had not bin thought the chefe contrivar of it, w^{ch} we all indeavour to make be thought otharwayes, for though you are not a cortiare I wod not have you be thought an Apossar of the Court . . . tis said the King rit to Mistress Lee with his one hand.'

The Lees had been treated like daughters by Sir Ralph, as their husbands gratefully recognised. There is a discussion whether they shall present their guardian with 500*l*. in plate or their portraits by Lely; Sir Ralph chooses the latter, and the pictures are at Claydon. Tom Wharton was not the man Sir Ralph might be expected to favour except in the Whig interest. 'My lord whorton's son as maryed my lady rochistars grandchild showed himselfe a gallant of

the times at Salisbury races, wher hee was more extravagant then most of the company and so more noted.' Cary can only hope that he will be 'more grave neer homb.'

No two figures in the society of the Restoration could be more typical of the old influences and the new than Sir Ralph Verney and his ward Lord Rochester.

Anne, widow of Henry Wilmot, 1st Earl of Rochester, had been accustomed to depend upon Sir Ralph for advice ever since her first marriage with Sir Francis Henry Lee of Ditchley. When her second husband died (in 1659) she claimed his services as guardian to her boy of eleven; and for her sake he had filled a difficult and thankless post. The names read strangely in conjunction, the grave Sir Ralph with his austere morality and fastidious tastes, and the handsome young peer, courtier and poet, with his wild genius, defying all authority human and divine, 'for five years together continually drunk,' leading the mad revels at Court, or practising physic as a mountebank on Tower Hill, with equal 'exactness & dexterity.' Sir Ralph had been summoned in haste by the Dowager on the occasion of 'my sonne Rochester's suden marage with Mis Mallet Feb. 15,
1666. contrary too all her frinds' expectation. The King I thank god is very well satisfyed with it, & they had his consent when they did it—but now we are in some care how too get the estate, they are come too desire too parties with frinds, but I want a knowing frind in busines, such a won as Sr Raph Varney—Mas: Coole the lawer & Cary I have heare, but I want one more of quality too help mee.'

Old John Cary still transacts their business; he writes, when Sir Ralph is invited to Rycote, 'I pray do not thinke of trouble to my Lord Norreys, for he will be very glad of your company & bidd you very wellcom, & so will his good Lady: You catch me with a why-not still: Indeed my memory growes bad, very bad, & things go out as fast as they come into my head now, I am walkeing (as well as others) apace towards the land of forgetfullness & cannot help it, it must be—Happy are those who are fit for that day.'

Fourteen years of a wild life had followed his marriage, but Lord Rochester's reckless self-indulgence had been unable to quench his lovable qualities, and those about him accepted his repentance with eagerness when 'he came to himself.'

In 1680 he is very ill, and is advised to drink ass's milk. Sir Ralph is, of course, to find the ass. Mr. Cary writes: 'I much feare my Lord Rochester hath not long to live, he is here at his lodg & his Mother my lady dowager & his lady are with him, And doctor Short of London & doctor Radcliffe of Oxon. Himselfe is now very weake, God Almighty restore him if it be his will, for he is growne to be the most altered person, the most devout & pious person as I generally ever knew, & certainly would make a most worthy brave man, if it would please God to spare his life, but I feare the worst, at present he is very weake & ill. But what gives us much comfort is we hope he will be happy in another world, if it please God to take him hence, And further what is much comfort to my Lady Dowager & us all in the midst of this sorrow is, his Lady is returned to her first love the protestant religion, And on Sunday last received the Sacrament with her lord, & hath bin at prayer with us, so as if it might please God to spare & restore him, It would altogether make upp very great joy to my lady his mother & us all that love him.'

June 7,
1680.

'He is like to dye,' Sir Ralph writes; 'his mother watched with him last night; he hath been a most penitent and pious man in this sicknesse.'

June 15,
1680.

A week later Mr. Cary reports that 'My lord we hope is on the mending hand, but many changes he meets withall, pretty good dayes succeed ill nights, which help to keep upp his spirits, but he is very weake, and expresses himselfe very good, I hope God will spare him for his owne service for the future.'

July 18,
1680.

'My lord Rochester continues very weake, he is sometimes a little lively & gives good hope of his recovery, but anon downe againe, which makes us much to feare the worst.' A week later he is dead; his young widow and

'my little Lord,' the last of his line, follow him to the grave before three years are out; and Sir Ralph lives to see his very name granted to another.

In contrast to Rochester's life, even amongst men of fashion, we hear of Christopher¹ Battiscombe, an accomplished young man, who afterwards suffered in Monmouth's rebellion: 'his body made so very handsome and creditable a tenement for his mind, it had been pity it should have lived in any other. All that knew or saw him must own, Mr. Battiscombe was very much a gentleman. Not that thin sort of animal that flutters from tavern to playhouse and back again, all his life made of wig & cravat, without one dram of thought in his composition—but one who had solid worth.'

Monmouth himself was in Bucks in the summer of 1681. Sir Ralph and Edmund were in his company at 'the races on Quainton Meade' which lasted three days; 'Sir R. Temple and Mr. Wharton were there, and many persons of quality.'

Shaftesbury's success in getting up petitions to the King to allow Parliament to meet, drew forth a host of counter petitions, expressing abhorrence of the design to force the King's will. The address of the Town of Wycombe² 'presented by Dr. Lluellyn to his Maj^{ty} at Windsor upon Bartholomew day 1681,' is a type of the abject loyalty and the flowery language of the Bucks Corporations. They speak of 'the late defeated Politicians,' as 'disappointed of their dark designments by yr Majestie's profound wisdom & divine prevision,' and protest that 'wee have alwayes detested & rejected them, togeather with their now exploded scanty & forsaken abettors. We have ever incerted o^r loyall selves amongst the resolute, grave, & deliberate p'sons. And wee doe most highly applaud the stout fidelios, the

¹ Woolrych's *Life of Judge Jefferies*. He has had a namesake in the family ever since; and Christopher Verney Salmon, b. 1901, son of Major Salmon (whose mother was a Battiscombe) and Ellin Verney of Claydon, carries on the tradition.

² *History of Wycombe*, by J. Parker.

strenuous, brisk & valiant youth of this your now much undeluded nation. We therefore, Yor Mat^{ies} most dutyfull & most devoted subjects entirely p'fesse: That we will to the utmost stresse of or sinews, to the latest gaspe of our lives, & the last solitary mite in or coffers adhere to your Ma^{tie}. . . . Many have out stript us in the wing but none shall exceed us in theire wishes; we envye much their more earley apply, but none shall ever appeare more faithfull God preserve yor Ma^{tie} from all rebellious Machinacions. Amen.'

April 16,
1683.

The King repaid this adulation by an attack on the municipal charters, which placed the representation of the boroughs in his hands. The names of the Petitioners and Abhorrrers were soon changed into those party titles which have lasted to the present day. Two years later Mun writes: 'Tho: Smith went with Cosen Denton to Holson Race: where There Happened a Contest Betweene Wigg and Tory, the Later would not contribute to the Plate in case the Duke of Monmouth Didd Runne for it, and the Wigges offered to Make up the summe for it, in case the Toreys would not.'

Nov. 20,
1682.

When Shaftesbury is tried, Dr. Denton writes: 'Our friend Sr W. Smith is of this grand jury, where you know his pregnancy of parts will justly entitle him to be *Dominus fac totum*.'

March 29,
1683.

While the long dispute is raging about the succession, the two childless women, Catherine of Braganza and Mary of Modena, have their small rivalries. 'I heare ye Queen & Dutchess are not Cater-Cosins,' John writes, 'ye latier having at Newmarket given ye Country Ladyes leave to come to her in mantos, her Court was every night full, & ye Qu: sate alone. So when ye Fire happed, ye Dutchess & Lady Anne went to ye Queen's doore to attend her, but she sent them out word she would be private. Then they went to L^d Suffolks whither the Qu' &c being alsoe to goe, said she should fill ye house her selfe, soe ye Dutchess &c removed to Rochester's.'

This spring Eleanor Lee, now Countess of Abingdon, is

entertaining the Duke of York with his Duchess and Lady Anne at Rycote, where 'there are 9 choice Cookes to Dresse the Meate.' Mun hears that 'The City of Oxon presented his Highnesse the Duke of Yorke with a payre of Gloves: and the Earle of Abingdon writt to Cosen Denton to come & augment the Splendour of the Cavalcade that accompanied the Duke into Oxford Towne: but Hee went not: The Mayor of Oxon my cosen Towneshend [Mary Denton's husband] Didd not Go & wayte upon the Duke at his Lodging in Christ Church Colledge, because my Lord Abingdon could not secure Him that the Mace Should Be suffered to Be Held upp when He Entered into Christ Church colledge, wch it seemes the Bishop would not allow: so he went not to wayte on Him, my Cosen A. Denton went to Ricot to Excuse his not wayting upon my Lord when the Duke made his Entry into Oxford: and Thom: Smith went along with him. Major Stafford's Eldest Sonne is Dead: and so is Alderman Backwell, So That old and young Go to their Earthly Mansion, when Almighty God pleaseth so to Decree it.'

May 24,
1683.

May 28,
1683.

The Rye House Plot again disturbed the peace of the kingdom and cost two precious lives. Close to the lodgings where Betty Adams stays when she is in town, a scaffold is being erected 'right against the Marquis of Winchester's House, where the wrestlings are used to be in Lincoln's Inn fields,' upon which Lord Russell must suffer on the morrow. And so closely do tragedy and comedy jostle each other in this unhappy time, that while Algernon Sidney is being tried for his life, some mad court ladies, 'The Lady Mary Gerrard, & others, had a frolic to putt on men's aparell, & walke the streets attended with some Gentlemen. In Leicester fields they mett wth a fidler, & I know n^t on what provocations, but ye poore man was killed amongst them, tis said they are in ye Gate house.'

July 20
1683

Nov. 26,
1683.

John writes a few days later: 'Here is no newes but that Coll Sidney is to morrow to dye & tis said ye Whiggs have talkt him out of his life by talking the plot to be at an end & no more should dye for it.' He writes again when

Dec. 6,
1683.

the fatal deed is done: 'On Friday Coll Sidney was beheaded on Tower Hill, he dyed a great hero, shewing all the Indifferency Immaginable, he made no Speech, but delivered a paper to Sheriff Daniell (which he hath given to his Majesty, but tis said twill not be printed), He made a very short prayer to himselfe, & was beheaded at one stroke, before the horse Guards came, who were all with ye foote Guards, ordered to encompass the scaffold, & I think the foote Guards were but just on the hill.' 'He met death with an unconcernedness that became one who had set up Marcus Brutus for his pattern.'

CHAPTER L.

SAINT NICHOLAS' CLERKS.

1655-1685.

It is said that the romance of the road was buried with Claude Du Val in 1670; when, having been 'hanged a convenient time,' he was conveyed to his grave by persons of quality, with a fashionable train of the weeping fair, and laid under a white marble stone curiously engraved with the Du Val arms, in the middle aisle of St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden.

The Verney letters offer little enough of romance in the life of a gentleman turned highwayman; and he was likely to spend more of his days in dunning his friends from a stifling cell in Newgate, than in galloping over breezy commons, or lying in wait for dowagers' coaches in tortuous lanes. There were doubtless brave spirits, who, in a simpler age, might have 'stopped the mouths of lions,' or, in our own, would have found vent for their energies in African deserts, or in Arctic snows; but like Dick Hals, weary of risking their lives in being defeated by the Dutch, and sick of waiting for arrears of pay, they threw themselves into reckless and desperate courses, making war against a society which had refused to receive them as allies.

Even the sensible and prosaic John Verney felt his blood stirred by tales of their valour and resource. 'A couple of highwaymen,' he writes in 1679, 'having robbed a countryman & leaving him his horse, he pursued 'em with hue & cry which overtook them, but they being very stout fought their way through Islington & all the road along to this town's end, where after both their swords were broke

in their hands & they unhorsed, they were seized & carried to Newgate. *T'is great pity such men should be hanged.'*

The Verneys were not behind other persons of quality in owning relatives among these gentlemen of the road; and the correct and austere Sir Ralph did his best to get his highwaymen cousins out of scrapes. He gave them money; lent his wig, even, on occasion, to assist in a disguise and an escape; and used all his political and social influence to procure reprieves and pardons. Lady Hobart, living among the Judges, in the high places of law and order, threw her sympathies into the same scale, helping with all her might to baffle justice, and to promote adventure.

Whatever might be public opinion about the highwayman's career, his sentence never failed to evoke a burst of compassion. A rowdy gathering of good fellows accompanied him to the foot of the gallows, and laughed at the devil-may-care courage with which he met his doom; kind women, like Frances Hobart, shed hot tears of wrath and pity over his execution, while they prayed Heaven to have mercy upon his soul.

On less tragic occasions, those who had not themselves been robbed or frightened treated the adventures of their friends as a good joke; and a man like Colonel Henry Verney, when charged, half in jest, with an attack made on his old uncle's coach, was in no hurry to clear himself of an accusation conveying a distinct compliment to his pluck and horsemanship. Men applauded just as heartily when a traveller of unwonted courage stoutly defeated the gentleman who meant to rob him; in short, the risks of the road gave rise to a number of capital stories which had this spice about them, that the man who in his armchair laughed at the highwayman's audacity and the traveller's alarms, did so with the strong probability of having to experience both, the next time that his occasions called him abroad.

'Richard Dawson, whose family intermarried with the descendants of Mary Verney and Robert Lloyd, is remem-

bered for the courage with which he and his servant Christopher Fogwen successfully fought the highwaymen that infested Kennington Common and the neighbourhood. Mr. Dawson and Kit were famous characters in their day. They would sometimes drive out disguised as old ladies, in bonnets and veils, and, when attacked, would rush out at opposite doors, take their assailants in the rear, handcuff them, put them into the coach, and drive off in triumph with their captives.' ¹ Mr. Dawson was worth robbing, being as wealthy as he was capable and determined. He was at the head of the Vauxhall glass-works, established under the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham in 1670.

In 1657 Dr. Denton's coach was stopped on the highway by 'St. Nicolas Clarks . . . who rob'd him and his Lady.' The whole family cracked their jokes upon the Doctor; Lady Hobart hears that 'he has recruited his self of Hary and others at play; let him tack heed he be not met with agan.' Sir Roger Burgoyne tells them that if they will but undertake a journey to Wroxall, he will secure them from such kinds of vermin, and return them laden with thanks into the bargain. 'When you see the doctor let him know, I goo nowhar but I met with his news,' writes Lady Hobart, 'and never any man was so lafed at, for ever body macks mearth at it: tis said he knos the thefs, and my ant Varney vows Hary Varney one, and mayd por Pen mad; let him knou what a repitason he has with hur.' Good Nat is sarcastic. 'You doe well to make yourself merrie with the storie which goes of my cosain Hary Verney; it seemes he is pleased with it too, but I am persuaded he would have liked the money better then the jest.'

Frank Drake is coming to pay Sir Ralph a visit. 'We shall take it as a favour if you please to account us so farr strangers uppon the Way, as to send a Guide about nine aclock to the George in Alsbury, to direct us the best way for the coach by my cosen Winwood's gronds, or any other cleane way to Claydon, and my wife particularly intreats

¹ From the family MSS. of the Rev. C. F. S. Warren, by his kind permission.

you if my cosen Harry Verney be at home that you will shutt him up, for fear he meet with us as the Dr. was mett with, for whose Lightnes I am very sorry.' 'Harry is heere,' Sir Ralph replies, 'and I will shutt him upp for once, but for future Clapps, looke to yourselves for hee is a dangerous fellow, and wherever hee thinks any money may bee had, you know a protection will not be within my power.'

Each neighbourhood had its own legends of highway robberies; Bucks abounded in them, and Fuller has preserved for us a proverb of the county, 'Here if you beat a bush, it's odds you'd start a Thief.' An adventure in Buckinghamshire lanes befell Sir George Wheler. He was courting a beautiful young heiress, Hester Harman, who eventually refused him, and accepted Alexander Denton. When Sir George recalled in later years how he had been saved from the thieves who sought for him, he never omitted to thank Heaven that he had failed to gain the wife whom he had sought.

This was, however, a later development; at the time of his ride through Bucks,¹ 'in the summer of '72 or '73,' he carried about his person a jewel of great price to be given to the fair Hester; as well as a gold watch, 20 golden guineas and some silver; he had providently bargained that if he himself were to be rejected the jewel might be returned; in either event it was important that he should not be relieved of it by the way.

Sir George Wheler had spent some days with his tutor at Lincoln College, Oxford; and was sensible, he says, 'of the risque I were Like to Run in my Return to London.'

'To conceal the Time of my Return I knew was scarce possible among so much acquaintance; all that I could was to conceal the way I designed to Returne which I did, for I went downe the town as to goe by Beconsfield Road but as soon as I was out of East Gate turned Nor'wards, and went to Sr. Ralfe Varney his house in Buckinghamshire, where I was kindly entertained all night. Sir Ralfe Varney was a

¹ The *Genealogist*, vol. iii. pp. 45, 46.

worthy and ingenious Gentleman, I came to be acquainted with him at my Uncle Dentons, where I frequently met him.

'The next day Sr. Ralfe obliged me to stay and dine with him, and Staying after Diner too long, night overtook me before I could reach Alsbury. Within a mile or two of this town I came into a deep and narrow Lane, covered over with the trees in the hedges, so close that I could see neither way before me, nor skie above me, nor anything about me. Having Pistols before me, I drew one and held it in my hand, So that I could Span it in a moment for ffear of a surprise. I was not, I suppose, above half way down this Lane but on a suddain two or three men cald out Stand! Stand!! Stand!!! ffearing them to be Robbers I Blustered also &c., til we came to a Parly, and I demanding what they would have, they told me they were the watch sent to Stop all Passengers, ffor that there had been Robberies committed that Day upon Uxbridge Common; That every body had been Robbed that past that way from nine or ten in the morning til one or two in the afternoon, which was the time I should have bene there from Beconsfield had I gone that Road. So I desired these men to conduct me to the towne and shew me the best Inne, and I would Reward them.'

John writes: 'Last night about 6 miles from London April 13, 1586. the Dutch mail was robb'd by 2 men, who gott a purchase of 10,000*l.* in gold and Jewells, the letters are allmost all lost. There was one Passenger rode with the Post Boy, and a Trooper was so kind as to accompany them, but not to defend them. Sir Robt. Knightly and his son in the day time last weeke was robb'd just by his country house, by 3 highway men, who commanded them out of his Coach; and tooke neither Rings nor Swords but money, they were very well mounted. One of his servants, a woman, lookt on all the while and thought they had been of Sir Robert's friends. They calld him by his name, his and his son's loss was about 5*l.*'

When we turn from highwaymen in general to the special worthies belonging to the Verney family, we find two cousins, Hals and Turville, who earned the crowning

Aug. 23,
1658.

distinction of the gallows ; they were both connected with that strong woman 'ould Lady Verney,' mother of the Standard-bearer. Richard Hals was Sir John Leeke's grandson, and nephew to Anne Hobart and Dorothy Leeke.¹ Robin Turville had served with Sir Edmund Verney the younger, and Fred Turville claimed cousinship at Claydon ; Sir Ralph writes for him to his trustee, 'John Ashburnham to the care of Capt. John Walterhouse, governor of Garnsea Castle,' about some money Turville wants to spend 'to put him into a capacity to live. I heare hee hath been represented unto you under a very ill carracter, & soe hee was to me, which made mee the more narrowly observe him, & truly I must needes doe him soe much right as to assure you, that since I knew him, I could never justly Tax him with any manner of crime or vice, and yet hee hath spent some part of his Time in my owne house, and my Cozen Natt Hobart's, & with other of my neare friends, where hee hath gayned much Love and affection, & had hee misbehaved himselfe, I must have heard it.' Turville did not justify this good opinion ; just after the Restoration, Sir Ralph is concerned to hear 'how matters went with Fred Turville at his triall, for really I should be very much troubled if hee should suffer, but his own groundlesse confidence made him too carelesse, & may cost him deare.'

July 23,
1660.

He escapes on that occasion, but a few years later we learn his fate amongst other sensational items of family news sent by Edmund from East Claydon to John at Aleppo ; 'Cosen Jack Temple, Sir R's Brother, was tryed for having fourteen wives at once, and escaped the gallows. I think I have sufficiently spoken of marriages. Now for hanging, which also goes by destiny according to the opinion of some. My cosen, Fredd Turville was hanged at Hertford for burglary, and other crimes. But I'll speak no more of such ignominious ends, though these ensuing may be as deplorable ; for my cosen Thom : Danby was basely murdered in a tavern in London by one Burrage ; Cosen Reade killed in

¹ See vol. i. p. 118.

France ; Cosen A. Temple, lieutenant in a ship of war was slayné before Algiers,' etc., etc.

Frances Hobart, who had a special place in her heart for the black sheep of the family, refers to the catastrophe in a very different tone, in writing to Sir Ralph Verney : ' I received ^{Aug. 25, 1666.} a letter from my poor coussin Frederick Turville the day before he was executed, where he made a request to me to send you this inclosed which he did earnestly desire might be conveyed safe to your hands. I know you have had soe much kindness for hime that I fear his death has given you some troble, for though he was guilty of many crimes in his Life, yet he died as we are informed a very good christion, with a most undanted corage showd nothing of conserne at all, but told all thouse persons that where with hime at the place, which where divers gentlemen of great quallity, that he did not fear to die, but the manner of his death trobled hime ; he aded that he would not troble them with a formal speech only desired there prayers, and after he hade read some prayers which he hade in wrighting he weept, and made noe confestion there, he told them he hade don that to God, he died a chatholick, he had a priest with him a weeke, who wrought a great reformation in him. Noe gentleman was ever more lamented both by his friends and strangers, only by thouse barborous unclles that did make it apeere by there jingling proceedings that they designed his death all along, which I beleve will light hevie upon them ; and Walker with his servants declar it was their will he should die ; and for his sister it ware to tedious to tell how unnaturall she had bine. He expressed some troble that in all the time of his affliction she never once came or sent to him ; it is too late to wish, but certainly had you bine in town I doe verily beleve he had never come to this, but there was an ill fate hung over him, for there was many designes for an escape, but he neglected them. . . . They did not take any care at all for his buriale, but that woman that was continually with him till his death did bury him in the church yard. I know not what she is, but never any woman had a greater kindness for any man than she, and

has spent all she has, and sold all to her skin for him. Sir I have dwelt too long upon this unpleasing subject which I biceech you pardon.'

Aug. 15,
1666.

Lady Hobart adds her testimony to his merits: 'Sir Wilam Glaskock was with him to confes, but he wold not, he sayd he had lived ill but he wold not dy lick a knaf nor ruen a family, but he sayd he shold see he cold dy as unconsigned as he was then, his unkell Will at last wold have saved him, but he pretended he cold not, but wold have had his sister gon to have beged his lif but she wold not, she sayd let him be hang, I sent him an slugell but I hear he had not a cofen nor a frind to bery him, the contry cry out of his onkells, he did expres kindnes to you and to us and my Ant Vearny.'

Of Dick Hals we know much more, as he lived on terms of intimacy with his Claydon cousins, especially with Edmund Verney, who was about his own age. His father, Captain William Hals,¹ made his will in 1637. Having returned but two years before from a West Indian voyage of great danger and suffering he was 'bound forth' once more on his perilous way. He took with him a good part of his personal estate 'as an adventure, in hope to improve the same, having divers debts due to him in the Ilands of the West Indies.' He bequeathed his 'plowland of Ballymore' and his lease of 'the two plowlands of Juthimbathy,' both in the county of Cork, 'and the stock of some reasonable value thereon,' to his 'deare and well-beloved wife Bridget, and that young and tender child whom it hath pleased God but lately to bestow upon me.' When we next hear of them, the sea-captain has died 'in his shipp.' The 'well-beloved' Bridget has married again, and the boy is in England for education, where Doll Leeke, his guardian, lavishes upon him what little cash she receives as Lady Gawdy's gentlewoman, and all a maiden aunt's wealth of devotion. He ingeniously defeats her efforts to make him work in any profession, but in his nineteenth year she writes triumphantly to

Nov. 1655.

Sir Ralph, 'My nefew has put on his gowne. I thought it

¹ See vol. i. p. 121.

had bin only discours and not a reall intension.' He replies, 'Tis true your Nephew hath at last put on his Dec. 3, 1655.
gowne, but I beleewe 'twill come off againe much easier, or I am much mistaken in the Humour of the man.'

Sir Ralph's forebodings were justified. Doll writes to him six months later: 'My sister Hobart sends me word July 2, 1656.
you will lay out ten pounds for Dick if he can get a plas, I give you humble thanks for it, I shall not fail to pay it . . . the pore boy has been willing to save his Mother's credett, tho' he has left himsele in the lurch, and to the Charity of his frinds hear, He lost his time extremely while he was with his mother, and spent his twenty pound a year. The Master that I sent him to, gave a very good Carractur of him, and sence you are plesed to take notis of him, I pray obledg me so much, if you know of any lawer or aturney that wants such a servant, that you will asist him in the procuring of it. Reallie he was a very good conditioned youth, and can write 2 or 3 good hands.'

'I find by my sister you have layed out some monies for July 30, 1656.
Dick, I shall not fail to see it payed, as sone as I receve it. I am sorry we should give you such a trouble, but it is the fate of nedy peopel to opres ther frinds . . . it troubles me very much that Dick can get no preferment, I cannot endure to think he should goe back to his mother (in Ireland), whear he has lost so much time allredy, I had rather he wear a souldier, which is the worst of all professions. I have filled the paper therefore should think of a conclusion, but I fancy myself with you all this time and that is so great a plesur that I forget it is but a fancy.'

In the spring of '63 Aunt Doll comes once more to the rescue. 'You see the condision of pore Dick Hals,' she Feb. 8, 1663.
writes to Sir Ralph, 'if I healp him not his life may be lost upon that accunt, which wold give me a very great troble.' The shiftless boy who was idling about the Law Courts in 1656 had taken a long step in his downward career by the time this letter was written to Mnn Verney:

'Sir, Since it was my unhappinesse to returne into England soe much contrary to your advise, I was, un-

fortunately betrayed to the Master Keeper of Newgate and sold for 100*l*. by a tretchorous frind in February last, where I have ever since remained in Irons. I cannot expresse with what joy I should kisse your Hand should you vouchsafe to visit mee, which if you should please to thinke mee worthy soe greate a happinesse, you might not bee seene to come to the prison, but to the Fountayne Taverne by St. Sepulchre's Church, and send one of the drawers to the Keepers, and they will bring mee to you. Sir herein you would make mee infinite happy. I knowe not howe it may goe with mee, but my Life is in much danger but till I see you I shall be silent. . . . You may send for mee by the name of Captain Granger, for by that name I am known in prison. I lye on the Master's Side in Newgate.'

May 25,
1666.

In 1666, Richard Hals has found an outlet for his energies more worthy of his father's son; he thanks Mun for innumerable kindnesses, and tells him that he is 'once more in a fayre way, eyther to intreate or force fortune to bee my frinde, I meane I am gott on board the Revenge. I have waighted both on the Duke and Prince. The Duke hath promised me that the next councill of warr shalbe for my good. I hope hee wil be his words' master. Our Flage men doe really beleve that the Dutch will ingage in the beginninge of June. Pray God send itt prove true. . . . We shall have but 80 sayle this summer to fight the Dutch, the rest are designed for the western station to keepe the French Privaters in awe. . . . We shall sett sayle for the Downes within six dayes.'

June 15,
1666.

He gives Edmund an account of their engagement with the Dutch, which had lasted from a Friday to a Monday night. 'It was oure fortune att first to be out of the fight, our ship beinge one of Prince Rupert's squadron and bound to the Westward; on Sunday afternoone we came in and did the best we could to se the ende of itt. The Dutch had notice of our fleetes dividing, by two dogger boats they kept on the outside of the Goodwin Sands, our flecte then riding in the Downes, there could be noc hiding our intentions from them. The Duke was not above 46 sayle

when wee began, the Dutch were 90 besides 16 fresh shippes that on Sunday came out of Flushing. When we joyned with the Duke he had lost some shippes, the Prince Royall, the Swiftsure, the Essex, the Bull, the Ouverture [?], the Eagle, the Loyall George; besides many others that were soe farre disabled in their masts and rigging, that they were forced to leave the fight soe that when the Prince joyned with the Duke, wee could not make above fiftie sayle, most of them not fitt to ingage . . . yett did wee continue to doe our duties to the uttermost of our abillities.' 'The Dutch for ought I could see were as willinge to leave fightinge as ourselves which was enough. The gasett will informe you what commands we have lost, whereof I must needs lament one, Sir Xopher Mynns, hee dies so much like a man, that he lyes more the subject of envy then pitty. Lord Admirall Harman lyves too as much honoured as the other died.'

Mun had written 'Worthy,' but the adjective hardly seemed suitable; he corrected it to—'Dear Cousin, I have received divers letters which answer my request to you concerning maritime Accounts for which I thank you. . . . Our huge losse both of men and shippes of such worth, grieves me exceedingly, . . . and I hope there will no more such vast jeofayles¹ bee perpetrated where by whole Nations may be put into great jeopardy, and that our wooden Bulwarks and Forts (than which we have no other) may no more be basely and cowardly yeilded up to our Ennemies, but that some course will be taken to preserve our ancient Policie, which was (if I am not mistaken) that all Commanders and souldiers whatsoever of or in any of the King's ships were to perish in and with them, rather than to let them come into Ennemies hands; all which was worthily performed by Our fore-Fathers.' 'But if thy Destiny and (I hope) good luck throw Thee againe into the sea, then I wish thee most particularly (though unto all my brave countrymen) happy successe and victory.'

Dick Hals sends Edmund his journal written on board

¹ From *jeu failli*, as jeopardy is *jeu parti*, originally terms at cards.

the 'Loyall Colchester,' from July 19 to August 14, 1666. 'I have adventured to send your worship a breife account of my last viage and ingagement, in the most seamanlike tearmes my small travell in that art would furnish me with'—it is chiefly a log of wind and weather.

He has reached London, and acknowledges Edmund's letter of Nov. 21, 'in which you generously condole the losses of our navy by sea, I hope we shall regaine our lost flags and honours next springe. . . . I am tryeing to gett an imploy. Pray God send me good lucke. I have lardge promisses but noe sure ground as yett. I want frends to stirr a little for me. I have greater reason now to expect itt then before, since I have sealed my alleagance with some part of my bloud, though noething of danger.'

Dec. 17,
1666.

Edmund replies: 'I wish I were able to helpe you to an employment according to your good deserts, but in fayth I am but a poore Country Gentleman without any interest at all in reference to those matters, but . . . if you please to come and keep Christmas with me here you shall be very very welcome.'

Dec. 22,
1666.

'I find the maine stopp of both my biussnesses,' Dick Hals writes to Sir Ralph, 'to be want of money to the clarkes att the Navy Office, and to my Lord Generall's Secretary. I have tryed all meanes and wayes to gett in my owne wages which amounts to neare 16*l*., but I find I cannot doe itt till after Christmasse.' He asks the loan of 3*l*. till his pay comes in, which Sir Ralph sends him. 'Remember I was borne,' he says, 'a trouble to my friends.' Without pay or employment poor Dick could not long keep out of mischief on shore, and there is an urgent note from Lady Hobart to Sir Ralph, 'As you love me let me have one of your whitist wigs and you shall have a new one for it. It 'tis to help away a frind. You shall know all hereafter. Fail not to send it, and let it be that that is lest curled.'

Feb. 1667.

Richard Hals is choosing some armour for his cousin in London; he has tested it 'with as much powder as will cover the bullet in the palme of your hand'; Mun wants to test it again, which the armourer objects to, as 'it is not the

custome of workmen to try their armor after it is faced and filled. . . . As for tasles noe horseman in England weares them and as for a quilted gorgett,' but here a mouse has dined, and the postscript alone remains. 'I have seene all the best armors in the gards, but can see none such as yours are, my Lord Gerard's excepted.' Lord Gerard commanded the eighty gentlemen of the King's Life Guards; Charles had knighted the Commissioners sent by the City to greet him on arrival, with Lord Gerard's sword. Edmund's armour sent down by Plaistow, the carrier, was valued at 14*l.* 2*s.* 8*d.*, the box and cord at 2*s.* 6*d.*

'The Armour fits well enough, only the man did cut away to much just under the Arme pit both of back and breast; but for the head-piece, it is something heavy, yet I think it well enough if it did not come downe so low upon my forehead, as to cover all my eyes and offend my Nose, when I put my head backwards to look upwards.'

Dick congratulates Edmund on the birth of his eldest son, 'God make him a better man than his father; that's blessing enough.'

In 1669 'divers Highwaymen are taken, and had not Dick Hals leaped out of a window 2 storeys high leaving his horse and his cloathes behind he had been taken. Warrants are out for him and many more, the King will pardon none but such as come in and discover and convict their fellows.'

In '70 'Cousin Dick says he is married to a sailor's wife at Wapping.' In '71 he writes to Sir Ralph and Edmund from Exeter gaol: 'I, the most unfortunate amoungest men, am now forced to act a strange part in this westerne stage of our English world, imprisoned for noe offence. . . . Whether I live or die, is not much matter, itt not beinge the part of a man to testifie too much fearefulnesse of that which of necessitie will come one time or other, besides I doe not beleve itt ever lay in my power to prevent the stroke of my destenie. I have written to my cossen, your brave sonn, for a whindinge sheete, that in itt I may with my

Dec. 23,
1669.

Feb. 18,
1671.

A A.

boddy winde in the 'eternall' remembrance of his aboundinge spiritt.'

Feb 19,
1671.

'Your pardon I beg,' he writes to Edmund, 'as beinge the person to whom I am most obliedged of mankind, nor may you justly deny itt, iff you consider you give itt not now to the liveinge but to the dyeinge admirer of your person. Thet over-rulling hand of fate nic't me in the bud, when I least thought of harme, and in a place where I never did any, soe that lyeinge in gayle onely for want of bayle for the peace, I am like to be made knowne for what in truth I have bene. . . . I am att present in St. Thomas' ward Exon, and, Sir, would bee much att peace could I see three lines under your hand. My Aunt Hobart will send itt to mee. My thoughts are unsettled, and sometimes unwilling to leave this world, but when I think of my misserable life past, I againe recover, and possest with thoughtes becominge a soldier I passe by all concerns.'

Dick Hals might abuse himself but he allowed no one else to do so. He writes indignantly 'to Mrs. Hannah Baker, in Chancery Lane at Sir Nathaniel Hobart's,' 'Because I am att present sunck by the hand of the most powerful God, you amoungest the rest make me your scorne.'

April 30,
1672.

Next comes a melancholy letter to Edmund from Newgate: 'I have made a hard shift to hould out three or fower yearres in a bad kinde of life, I meane, the highway, for which I am att last condemned to die, justly as to the law, though by the unjustnesse of a falce frende, who fainte-harted, swore against fower of us, to save his owne life. But, Sir, his Majestie, out of his infinite mercy, hath bene pleased to save our forfeited lives by his royall repreëve. My Aunt Hobart was the maine instrument, under God, who proved herselfe a mother and an aunt both in this affayre. That verry day I was taken in my bed by 4 in the morninge. They then robbed mee of every pennysworth of my ill-gotten goodes, and enclosed mee in a dungion, where I was kept without candle, fire, pen, inke or paper or frende, till they brought me before the Judges. Neyther could they

then have done me any hurt, had not Judge Morton, by his insinuatinge facultie, over perswaded one William Ward to confesse, and to appeach Andrew Palmer, John Britton, James Slaughter and myselfe, which he impudently did, and, by his evidence alone, was we convicted. I have not wherewithall to subsist but what I have from the charitie of my frendes, for truly, Sir, they left me not worth one farthinge, when I was taken. God deliver me out of there handes and send me on board some shipp in the fleete, fire-shipp or other.' Mun agrees, it would be better 'de hazarder sa vie plus honorablement, que de la perdre sur un gibbet pour meschancetez.'

A few days later Hals appeals to Sir Ralph. 'The Kinge goes out of towne to see the French Fleete, as wee heard this verry day, soe that we shalbe left in danger of Judge Morton's ffury, which is implackable, especially to me, for goeing by his name, as hee is informed. Now if I could possibly make the Recorder my frende, he is able to ballance Judge Morton, and overway him on the Bench, which is not to bee done but by his clarke, Mr. Rumsey. It appeares that my Aunt Hobart did promise him a gratuitie, for the non-performance of which, hee did, in plaine termes, threaten my life in the gayle by insencing his unckle, the Recorder against mee, and itt's verry probable may doe me some greate injury, if not prevented in tyme by sattisfaction. The other three that were condemned with mee gave him 5*l*. each man, and soe would I but that I cannot as yett gett in money which I have in hands abroad. They tell us heare in Newgate that we may be endited uppon other Enditements next Sessiones, which, if soe, our lives will againe lye on the Recorder's good report to the Kinge. I beseech you, honnoured Sir, aske advice on this poynte and let Mr. Fall resolve me, and out of your abundant charitie be pleased to assiste the most unfortunate of your honner's captivated kinsmen.'

He writes again : 'The Kinge crost us out of the generall pardon and to what intent I know not ; some say to goe to Tangere, but I beleve to be hanged, which I am sure stands

May 2,
1672.

May 16,
1672.

July 11,
1672.

Sept. 14,
1672.

with most reason. They intend to endight us againe as I heare, which if they do I am resolved to pleade guilty to all, and if there comes a thousand pardons still keepe me to the Kinge's mercy, except you send me other advice.' Two months later he thanks Edmund for his great kindness, and wishes him 'a merry buck season.' 'Were I in any other gaole then Newgate, I would venter a tryall of skill to see you, but this place is made past all hope.' . . . 'Tomorrow beinge Wednesday, I and the rest of my fraternitie are to pleade a pardon of transportation, some say for the Tangeir Gallies, and others, more moderate, tell us for Virginia.'

It would have been worse than death for a naval officer, who had served with distinction in action, to be sent to the galleys; but Hals was not without old shipmates who remembered his better days. 'Capt. Thomas Elliot my former Capt. att sea, attended the Duke of Yorke in this Citty, in order to his Knighthood for his service done in this and the former warr; and hearinge by a friende of mine, that I have neade of his assistance, gave me a vissitt the second day of his arrivall; hath promised to begg on his knees for my releasement; will to my advantage declare my service under his command in the last Dutch warr, will engage for my future Deportment (which is much) and carry me with him to sea in this present expedition to the streights. Soe God seemes att last to bee passified.'

Probably Captain Elliott's intercession was unavailing, as Dick refers next spring to his recent 'happy escape out of prison,' and laments his ingratitude 'to soe deare a frende as Mr. Palmer,' which he can 'never sufficiently repent of.' For Doll's sake he is being nobly entertained at Croweshall, 'and indeed above the merrits of any kinsman though more happy and fortunate than myself.' . . . 'And on my yet inviolate faith I protest, I would hast to the place I am ordered to'; he sends his 'harty acknowledgments to Sir Chas. Gawdy & that incomparable lady his Mother, that if I die in this expedition my Goast may not be troubled to cross the seas to do it. . . . I am not sent away naked, but with Sword, Clothes, and Money, and to Eternize the obligation, all wth

so free & generus a soule, that I some times beleve y^t I can bee nothinge lesse then a sonn to the one, or a brother to the other.'

Sir Ralph has again given efficient help, 'for nothing can miscarry, where so much generositie leads the van.' 'And,' ^{Feb. 10, 1673.} Dick writes to Mun, 'I am to goe on pilgrimage to the next Campaigne in Holland there to pay those vowes I never made, to serve the French Kinge against the Dutch; but since nothing else but a bad cause can Expiate crime like mine, I submitt to my desteney and resolve to fight for pistolls, and leave conscience att home, my religion beinge yett to chuse. I hope you will not feare my beinge Converted by the Jesuits, but be I, or be I not, I will rather turne Infidell then ever subscribe to any other bible then Your most oblidged & most Affect: Coss: & humble Serv^t Rich: Hals.'

He assures his devoted Aunt Hobart that he hopes, in the Low Countries, 'to acquire honour or a grave or both.' Having failed to get either, he finds himself next in Chelmsford gaol, ready to reveal anything or betray anybody. 'Shame kept me from writing before,' he confesses to Sir ^{Feb. 8, 1674.} Ralph, 'but now beinge absolutely resoulved to hate for ever the company and name of a thiefe, the Clergy of Essex, who have bene dayly laboringe with me to cleare my conscience before I die, have prevayled with mee to make this discovery.' The 'Clergy of Essex' were scarcely to be congratulated on their penitent who had stooped to this last baseness 'to win his salvation.'

'My Cossen Frances receaved a note from me,' he writes ^{Feb. 8, 1674.} to Sir Ralph, 'wherein was a full discovery of all persones I did or doe knowe that use the pad; but my keeper haveinge bene att London finds thinges, I judge, worse than he thought . . . my discovery was made the 21st. of the Last mounth, to Sir Edward Smyth att Woodford, and to Mr. Justice Maineard, who committed me, with Matt Roberts, Toby Burke alias Faulkner, Thomas Dwite alias White, and Harris, which Harris and Burke or Faulkner are taken and in the Gatehouse. Sir Edward Smyth may easely sattisfie

himselfe by seeinge Harris, for he tooke him by the bridle first. The King's proclamation acquits the first discoverer, and soe will the judge, iff Captain Richardson doe not prevayle to the contrary. I humbly beseech you to use your interest with Judge Twisden to this effect. Serjant Bramston, Sir Mundivile Bramston and Sir John Bramston are powerfull men with my Lord Twisden.'

June 22,
1674.

Dick's confessions were not yet full enough. The wretched man gave abjectly all the information asked for. 'When I came into this gaole,' he writes from Chelmsford, 'I was resoulved to die unknowne to my frendes, but Providence orderinge itt otherwayes, to my greate advantage, for althowe I am to be banished, itt is but what I should have courted iff left to my owne dispose, being assured that England, Ireland or Scotland are not places for me to rayse my fortune in, soe that to be sent, as I am promised, by that noble gentleman, Esquire Cheeke, into Flanders, Holland, France or Spaine, is the compleate sune of my desires or ambition.' But his fate is yet uncertain; he despairs again. 'The tyme drawers neare. I am yett a lost man, sure, sure, sure.' . . . 'That I am a deade man is most certeyne. I knowe itt from too good a hand to doubt itt. I had itt from Esquire Cheeke, who loves me more than I deserve, and promised yet once more to try the Judge.'

July 7,
1674.

July 26,
1674.

The path of the informer is thorny. Dick feels that he has sold himself to the devil, without getting his wages. 'All the miseries which attend humanity have fallen on my head. . . . This onely must afflycte me, that I was soe weake, on promise of life, to discover others, and yett by the severitie of my new masters, the Judges, to be tyed up for my good service. Besides this, all the gentlemen and Justices of the Peace in this county of Essex have bene made staulkinge horses. The noble Sarjant and his ffamily to come severall tymes to take my examination, and to retorne itt to London, and then Judge Whindam himselfe to promise life on the tearmes aforesaid, yett all these poyntes in controversy to be throwne aside and nothings but death thought on—this is Justice when the Devill shalbe Judge!

Could they not as well have pressed me or hanged in my state of inocency, I meane, while I was a pure theife, without blott or blemish, as to make me stincke in the nostrills of my ould associates, and then out of love to hange me for my new service to my new masters.'

He makes one more despairing appeal to Sir Ralph from Chelmsford Gaol. 'I am ashamed to discover my weaknesse unto you, but I must. The sight of the executioner, who is still kept in the house in expectation of my execution on Monday next, is the greatest torment to me in the world, worse then death itselfe.'

But Dick was to have another chance. 'I have, I thanke God and good frendes, got the weather gage of ill fortune. . . . That most worthy and generous gentleman, Capt. Collins, into whose hands I putt myselfe after my escape out of gayle, will give an account for his fidellitie eyther here or hereafter.' Sir Ralph has sent him a welcome gift of twenty shillings by his laundress.

But in the spring of '75 he is back in Chelmsford gaol, and in mortal fear of the associates he had betrayed who have come from France to witness against him. 'Iff thinges had not bene soe privatly carried,' he writes to Sir Ralph, 'I should not now have troubled all my noble kinsmen and frendes. How they will deale by me this Assisses, I know not nor can I learne of anyboddy what is done for me . . . onely a she frende, wife to Carew writ me downe word (ould love will not be forgotten) that her husband, and Stanley and Palmer and the rest have layed their heades togeather to cutt me off, the way they intende to goe to worke she could not informe me, but soe soone as she knowes she will. Least I doe not live to write more unto you pray Sir . . . present my respects and service to my generous cossen Verney . . . and with my soule I wish I had taken his counsell when time was. . . . Iff I am not hanged, I shall goe, like Mounseir Le Gue, without a shirt. My Aunt hath promissed me an ould one a longe tyme, but her many troubles makes her forgett me.' There is a postmark on the letter, 'Essex Post goes and coms every day.'

Feb. 22,
1675.

‘Had not the commands of that noble gentleman, Sir Moundeford Bramston, and my faythfull promise to him made, kept me prisner, more then my gayle and chaines, I would longe since have given you all a visitt att London, but now I will abide the worst, yett itt were good, iff the Judge be morose, to send downe my last reprove, which came when I was from home takeing the ayre. Who brought itt I know not, but I was tould by the gaylour and severall others that itt cam durante bene placito Regis. Iff soe, itt will still save my bacon.’

March 13,
1675.

Dick Hals’ next letter is to Lady Hobart. ‘What will become of me I know not in this miserable place. Were I a ship board to be transported to any place (Tangiers excepted) I would be well content. The truth is I have deserved the worst that can bee, but God will not allowe each man his desserts, least more perrish than hee is willinge to loose. Sir John Bramston wrote me word before the Assiyes that he had written to a very good frende of mine att London, I knew he meant one of his generous brothers, to insert me in the Newgate pardon. Iff soe I must be removed by Habeas Corpus to London to pleade itt. . . . Sir John Howell, the Recorder, was very briske with me, I beleve he remembred ould stories. Iff my noble Cossen Edmond knew my condition, I doe verryly beleve he would doe more for me then all my new frendes. My most Excellent wife beleves mee past further service, in England, therefore neyther comes, nor sends to mee. I am not sorry for itt, but on the other side glad, however she is indebted to mee, if ever I gett out, more then she will willingly pay mee. Iff Sir Ralph will put the Noble brothers in minde of my businesse I may gett out the next Assisses of this place, but iff neyther hee, nor they doe acte, I am sure to lye till I rot, which will not be longe, for the ould distemper is not cured. My humble service to generus Sir Ralph Verney, Madam Cornewallis, Madam Gibbon and her sister, Sir Tory Smith and his Lady and those deare children ; my deare Cossen Anne and my noble Cossen Edmond Verney when you write to Claydon, I most humbly subscribe

most Honored Aunt Your for ever obleidged kinsman and servant.'

A note received by Sir Ralph in Chancery Lane is docketed from 'Dick Halse, a Highwayman—since hanged.' Nov. 1675
'I am in greate want, this cold winter will kill me outright. The bearer sits on horsebacke while I write.'

The charity of Dick's relations was not exhausted, and he writes to Sir Ralph 'next dore to the Black Balcony in Feb. 15, Lincolln's-Inn Feilds in Holburne Row.' 'I wish my 1676.
gratfull soule were not confined within the narrow limmitts of a foole's brest. . . . I dare say you beleve I pray for you, and wish you all prosperitie, and that I have just cause to admire and adore that providence, whose carefull eye amoungest soe many greate men, my frends, pitched upon yourselfe to preserve me.' But neither God nor 'greate men' could long help poor Dick against himself; a piteous line reaches Sir Ralph in June '76, written apparently from London. 'I am now arrived at the worst place in England, where sinne and vice abound to an infinite. I trust my newborne grace will defende me and ittselfe from participating this sinck of humers and disorders.'

Three years later Sir Ralph writes to John: Lady Hobart is at Claydon—'well, but somewhat weake of her Aug. 18, leggs—she brought downe her daughter, her two Maydes & 1679.
little Will—And least they should bee too few she invited Dick Hals too, & never acquainted me with it. He came downe in a cart with her Cooke mayd, but he is at your Brother's house.'

After this he gets an appointment: 'Dick Hals is a Baly Nov. 23, but dos not dou no duty,' Lady Hobart writes; 'he has tou 1679.
men but he is to over se all the balys, for they have cheted hyly; he receives all the mony of the cort, and has rased it much sene he cam in, he is very hones, and I hop will kep so, my stomack is not so good as it was at cladon, I mis your good bear, I find the ale mor havey.'

Dick turns up again in unwonted surroundings. His cousin, Doll Smith, Anne Hobart's grandchild, is to be married at Radcliffe to Mr. Wythers, and these warm-

hearted relations, who have stood by Dick in his darkest days, have bidden him to the wedding.

July 3,
1682.

Edmund Verney, who had been looking after his hay-makers through the long July day, watched from his garden gate the smart cavalcade as it passed through East Claydon in the evening. The great Sir William Smith, with his usual taste for splendour, drove the bridegroom's family down in his coach, with eight men on horseback in attendance. Dick Hals, riding with the other wedding guests, turned into the White House, to greet his old friend as he went by. 'He sent over the next day,' Mun writes, 'by a Messenger-express for a Plaister for his side, from my Chirurgeon, & withall sent word that to morrow is the wedding-day, so Pegg must dance barefoot, otherwise Thom. Smith, Mr Wythers, Mr King & Dick Hals were to have dined with me, but when people marry wives, they cannot come.' There was much merry-making at the wedding; 'ten shillings were given to the Ringers at Buckingham, the fiddlers of Gawcott were sent for.' Hester Denton drove over from Hillesden in her coach; and Parson King made love to Pegg, the bride's lively little sister, in such wise that the aunts and cousins gossiped pleasantly of another festive gathering to be held ere long. The grim highwayman must have been a tragic figure in the peaceful old grey church, and amid the village festivities, the music and dancing, the sunshine and the roses. But Dick could be a gentleman when he chose, and perchance the stories darkly hinted at concerning this strange relation, whose long absences and sudden returns were alike unaccounted for, gave him a romantic interest in the eyes of the bride and her maidens. A few months later he is going about Buckingham with Tom Smith drinking at several houses, 'to make interest for Sir William Smith against a new Parliament,' and most successful in capturing votes instead of purses.

These were the last gleams of light in a stormy day. Hals soon resumed his desperate courses; his one remaining link with better things being his love for his child, whom he

could seldom see. To his faithful friend, Edmund Verney, he writes: 'After 30 yeares service I feare I am lost, left to the wide world, but bee itt how itt will, whielst the Emperor and Turke are at variance, I will not want. All that troubles me is my little boy, but God is able to provide for him. I would if I could.' April 20,
1683.

Two years more elapse of ignoble stratagems and hair-breadth escapes. The perils of the road are notorious. In 1685 the Banbury coach is attacked 'going upp with a woman and a man riding by it for protection, 2 Horsemen met it & rob'd them all upon Grendon Common, & the Rogues are not taken.' Public feeling was exasperated, and the gentlemen of the road when caught could expect no more mercy. Judge Holt about this time visiting an old friend in prison, whom he had just sentenced, asked after their college chums. The answer was, 'Ah my Lord they are all hanged now but myself & your Lordship.'

'I have noe great news,' writes Dick Hals to Sir Ralph, with a dash of his old cheerful courage, 'but only that I thinke to die next weeke. I can doe more then David, for I can number my dayes, haveinge, as I judge, 10 to live from the date hereof, nor doth the law take away my life, but the mallice of Goaler and overheate of a Chiefe Justice, who rubbs too hard upon my ould sores.' He is grateful to Sir Ralph and Edmund for all their past kindnesses; no one would have been so ready to serve them 'had my starrs bene soe kinde to have called me to itt.' 'My tryall comes on the 29th of this mounth, and that day sennight, if not before, wee die. . . . We expected a proclamation or gaole delivery, but that's past hope.' John hears that 'at the Old Baily 23 were condemned to die amongst weh is Dick Halsey'; further efforts to save him were felt to be in vain. April 27,
1685.

Will Hals, the brave and pious sea-captain, praised God with joy for the birth of his only son, and this son was to be hung at Tyburn. Doll Leeke, who had so often helped and forgiven the wayward boy, had passed beyond the reach of evil tidings; Anne Hobart had long ago spent her

influence and exhausted her resources. Sir Ralph was in the midst of his troubled election at Buckingham; 'I am sorry for Dick Hals,' he writes, 'and wish he might have been transported, I trust God will forgive him, and keep us from such sad ends.'

There is no doubt of his fate this time, for John Verney has seen him 'in the cart'; Edmund, who has always done justice to the 'few virtues he had among many vices,' has a last kind word to say of him—'Cozen Dick is among the number executed, I am sorry for it, I wish I could have saved him. But if he be gone, I pray God rest his soule in Heaven.'

CHAPTER LI.

ELIZABETH PALMER, JOHN'S CHILD-WIFE.

1680-1685.

As the years went on, John's success in business was more and more sharply contrasted with Edmund's slovenly management of his estate and growing indebtedness; but Edmund's affectionate and generous nature might seem to entitle him to a larger share of domestic happiness than his colder and more prudent brother. After long deliberation, however, and some false starts, John's choice of a wife proved as superior to Edmund's, as his judgment of the value of any other commodity; and Mrs. John Verney is at this time by far the most attractive woman in the family.

The negotiations preceding John's marriage with Elizabeth, eldest child of Ralph Palmer and his wife Alice White, of Little Chelsea, are characteristic of the man. He objects to pay a single guinea that can be saved on the settlements; Sir Ralph tells him that 'Lawyers' clerks on these occasions use to bring in their bill as Apothecaries doe, but the Drs. are feed by discreation & soe are Lawiers . . . but in these things there is noe certainty, some aske more & some lesse according to the quality of the Client, or their owne greedinesse & we never use to dispute with them.' Eventually 'Sir John Coell' refused the five guinea fee which John 'prest him extreamly to take, saying he owed Sir R. V. so much he could not but doe anything for him.'

The difficulties were not on one side only. Mr. Palmer speaks so high, and makes so many stipulations, that John is at length forbid the house. 'A little of your advice Pray

Sir,' he asks Sir Ralph, 'for we are now on a punctilio of honour.' To his mistress, aged fifteen, he writes accepting his dismissal. 'I suppose your worthy father casts in this bone out of the abundance of his love towards you, as being unwilling to part with so beloved a creature. Madam, my whole life never mett with any Cross that went so much to my heart as this hath done. I have one favour to begg of you, that is a lock of your Delicate haire, who am too wretched I feare to expect a line from your sweet hand. And now Dearest Madam, I must (with heart-breaking) bidd you for ever adieu; and I pray God that all the felicityes that at any time attended the happiest of your Sex may be heaped on you: May you live plentifully many contented yeares in this world & have Eternall blessings in the next, these be the hearty prayers of Madam, Your Ladship's Passionate Lover & most unfortunate Servant, John Verney.

'I have no hopes of happiness unless you'll contribute. My father honours you highly and is very much Yr Servant.'

Mocking Nancy tries to cheer him by the assurance that 'E.P. has ferret eyes, and a thousand pimples,' but John fires up so fiercely in defence of his lady's complexion, that the calumny is withdrawn; and peace is concluded on the understanding that E.P. has but three small spots on her face, which are common after an ague, and that her eyes are of unusual size and beauty. 'A gentleman of Chelsey' tells John that his lady 'playes on the Espinetto and Organs and Gittarr, and danceth very well.'

When we hear again, John is providing himself 'with good clothes & store of Trimming to furnish the Comp^y with favours, weh I thinke are 90 odd knotts on my wedding sute.' He writes to his father on his wedding day: 'I am this morning going down to Westminster Abby to meet Mrs Eliz. Palmer, where after prayers we designe to be Married in Henry 7ths Chappell by Dr. Adam Littleton (where he's a prebend) very privately in our old clothes, none will be at it but her father, mother, brother & Aunt J. White, from thence we goe to the Rummer in Soper Lane in the City, whither

May 27,
1680.



Sir Peter Lely pinx.

ELIZABETH VERNEY (née PALMER), FIRST WIFE OF JOHN VERNEY

I invite them & Dr. Littleton to dine with me,¹ after dinner to visit my Lady Gardiner, whence to be gone about 5 or 6 a Clock, then goe eate a Tart at the treating house by Knightsbridge & soe goe home together about 9 at night when all their neighbours may be within their doors.' It sounds a very tiring programme for the poor little bride—who had not quite completed her sixteenth year—to be driven about from early morning. They paid their visit to Aunt Gardiner, 'leaving her as innocent as they found her,' 'keeping the news within our own doors from Thursday to Sunday, when wee shall owne it publiquely by our clothes in Chelsey Church and then to be sure all their neighbouring acquaintance of both the Chelseys will come in.' The bride and bridegroom write a charming little letter to Sir Ralph with their joint signatures to tell him that they have now 'performed that grand concern which entitles us both to be your children.'

They drive 'into London to pay visits,' and John sends Sir Ralph 'a Paper Box directed to you though most in it is for my Brother's family: It contains as followeth,—In a paper seal'd a Paire of white Gloves and a Payre of Collourd Gloves laced with Black flanders lace, which I desire your acceptance of, And if ye fingers be too long for you, Thom :

June 9,
1680.

¹ The bill of John Verney's wedding dinner for seven persons 'at the Rummer in Queen Street London.' May 27th, 1680.

	s.	d.
Beer-ayle	0	3 0
Wine	0	11 0
Orings	0	1 0
A dish of fish	1	0 0
2 Geese	0	8 6
4 fatt Chikens	0	8 0
2 Rabets	0	3 0
A dish of pcese	0	6 0
8 hartey Chokes	0	5 0
A dish of Strabreys	0	6 0
A dish of Chereys	0	5 6
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3	17 0

Servants 1s.

Hobart sayth he will alter them for you when in towne. All Genoa Gloves are long fingerd. A payre of Green fringed Gloves for my Brother; White & Collour'd Lace Gloves for my Sister; Pinke Coulour'd trimd Gloves for Master Ralph; Skye Coulour'd trimd Gloves for Master Munsey; White Gloves trimd with Green &c for my little neece, And one of my wife's Wedding Garters for Master Ralph as one of her Bridemen. These tokens of a Wedding I desire them to weare for my sake.'

Nancy Nicholas testifies that the bride has 'very handsome wedding clothes, well-chosen.' 'Lady Osborne's and Lady Gardiner's coach-full, Lady Hobart and a coach-full and the Dr. and his coach-full' come to call three or four days after the wedding. Nancy sends notice in advance, that Mrs. John may have her best clothes on. Aunt Osborne wishes to receive her, but laments that the heat 'has turned her cream to curds and that therefore she could not be within.'

Mrs. John Verney is never mentioned in the letters without some affectionate epithet. Child as she was, she at once took the place in the family which the eldest son's wife had never been able to fill. She visited the schoolboys of the family at Harrow, and mothered the tall nephews of her own age at East Claydon, as she did her undergraduate brother at Oxford, who poured out to her all his confidences and was proud to entertain her in his rooms at Trinity College. To her forlorn little niece, Molly Verney, she was specially kind, sending down 'a Paste-Board Chimney & all the implements with it, in a box for little Misse,' at seven years old; and when she was in her teens, looking after her clothes and her studies at Mrs. Priest's genteel establishment for young ladies at Chelsea, where the girl is said to improve wonderfully.

Her gracious kindness makes her home, 'over against the coffee-house in Hatton St. Hatton Gardens,' a happy meeting place for all the young ones of the family. She packs her coach to its utmost capacity, to take the Stewkeley girls to the 'Grand Ball at Chelsey School,' where Moll Verney and

Betty Denton distinguish themselves as dancers: 'I wish you could have seen "pretty Miss,"' she writes to the latter's flighty mother, Hester Denton.

Sir Ralph was her devoted servant, and her grave and matter-of-fact husband, some twenty-five years older than herself, never ceased to be her lover during the six short years of their married life. During their rare separations, their letters reveal the depth of tender sentiment which underlay the cautious reserve of the worldly-wise man of affairs. He writes to her while she is paying some family visits in Bucks and he is in charge of the first baby: 'Dearest Deare, I wrote you this morning by the Coach Since which I have receaved your pretty lines under the 22th and for your tender Expressions there is nothing but a reciprocall love can make you returns, and that be confident you have: Pretty Preticus is grown much, and her nurse to that degree of bigness that you can't Immagine. . . . I have put up in a paper Box directed to you, your Black Crape Manto, to dress you in when the mornings are cold. . . . Make much of your deare selfe and 'twill doe comfort to me then, to heare of your wellfare and pleasure. My Mother hath bought y^e Child a Morelly Coate Striped Yellow & Black'—which sounds very unbecoming to a baby's complexion—and Some lace for Capps, that w^{ch} you left being, as she thought, too narrow. She hath put that on under it I thinke. I hope you were made much of at Hillesden, Radcliff & Stow, otherwise the Ladyes there loose there reputation with me. Pray Send one of yo^r Shoes to Alesbury or Euck^m to have a pare of Cloggs fitted to it, that you may walke about without takeing in Wett at your feet & what letters you receave from me either burn 'em or locke 'em up in y^e little cabinet: I thanke you for your ten thousand kisses and wish I had one halfe dozen from you in y^e mean time; but for this vacancy we'll have y^e more when I retorne to you whom God preserve. I rest your Truly loveing and most affectionate Deare J^{ne} Verney. I have had my hare cutt.'

Sept. 24,
1681.

Mrs. John sends him excellent reports of the business matters which are referred to her in his absence; she is

June 25,
1683.

much in request, but refuses invitations, only supping with her husband's old aunts, who delight in her company; 'all pleasure to me I find is nothing without you. . . . After church my cousens Stewkley sent for me to goe to Spring Gardens, with them & Mrs Dickenson, with a consort of Musick of Jack Stewkley's bringing, I thanked them but I did not care to goe because of Mrs Dickenson, but if she had not bin there I should not have gon with so many wild young men as there was, & had need take care who one gos abroad with these times. . . . I rest your most affectionate but maloncoly wife till your return E. V.'

June 28,
1683.

'Deare Heart,' he replies, 'I thanke you for your newes & for writing a long letter, for I could be all day reading your lines. . . . Now to employ you.' Here follows a list of commissions with such minute directions as Sir Ralph was wont to give Mary forty years before. His wife is to prepare for a guest. Nedd, his father's 'under butler & pheasant keeper,' is coming up from Claydon to fetch John's horses, and he is to stay three or four days that their man Robert may show him the town; he is not to sleep with him, however, 'first because of Robert's sore throat & 2^{ly} because that Bedd is but small & Nedd is grone bigg, soe it will not hold them . . . he is your acquaintance soe I need not bid you make him welcome.'

June 28,
1683.

'Dearest Joy,' she writes when he was going on from Claydon to look after their farms at Wasing, 'I hope you will make no long stay, for I long to se thee, I would not live this life allways without you for all the world. My duty to Sir Ralph and tell him I wish myselfe with him.' He sends her in return 'everything that the Lovingest of husbands can express to the best of wives, & love to the little ones not forgetting the kicker in the dark.'

'Dearest,' he writes again, 'I'me very Sorry John my Coachman Should be soe greate a Clowne to you & soe Sullen now I am from home; but t'is the nature of the Beast. I was so angry about it that I did presently agree with one here who is not a sightly fellow, but I thinke he is a better natur'd man then John, but (doe not speake of it to

anybody,) he never drove a Coach but once, but he is a very good Cart or Waggon driver & hath of a long time had a mind to live with me. . . . Pray as often as you see our Excellent Father & Mother let them have my Duty, with Love & Service to the rest of that family : & Blessing to my Children : and for thyself I send thee all the Kindness & Love which can be Expressst by your Deare Jn. Verney.'

Mr. Randall Davies, the historian of the Parish of Chelsea, has found a deed of 1746 by which Ralph, 1st Earl Verney purchases from his cousin Ralph Palmer the Chelsea house 'in which his mother was brought up, and which was the scene of so many charming incidents recorded in his father's letters.'

John keeps up his correspondence with the East; his friend the Pasha of Aleppo is said to have fallen in a great battle with the Poles. 'Our Aleppo letters acquaint us of a fire which hath burnt 3 or 400 shoppes & had not abundance of rain fallen ye same night t'would have donẽ much more mischief. Sr Thomas Bludworth's eldest son dyed by y^e Feb. 6, Inward breaking of a Veine: And Aldⁿ Burdetts second son 1679. is alsoe dead by accident, Thus: Being a Coursing, the Hare refug^d in a hole & he hearing y^e hare squeeke & beleiving a Dogg was gott into y^e refuge, & ye hare within reach, put in his arm, butt something bitt him by the hand, which payn'd him soe much as to force him out of y^e field, home, where he instantly had y^e Doctors & Surgeons but to little purpose for he dyed at 4 a clock in y^e afternoon & was bitt between 8 and 9 the same morning, one or two more are dead of fluxes, This we account a greate Mortality to heare of at once, from that healthy plase.'

John has become an important man in the City; his prudence carried him through some critical times when 'so March 30, many citizens have failed, that the first question every day 1676. asked is, Who is broke to-day?' 'The great discourse of the town is of Tompson & Nelthorpe the bankers who are failed. . . . Hynde & his partners have refused further payments. . . . the like is said of some others wch I am glad of, for I would have all bankers broke, they ruining the trade

July 14,
1679.

of the whole kingdom.' Besides his shares in the Levant and East Indian Companies, he is in the Guinea trade, and when the Royal African Company 'has become as poor as a courtier,' John goes down to Windsor with Sir Gabriel Roberts. They have 'some discourse with Sec: Sunderland & afterwards with his Majestie, about the Company's business.' They witness 'the Portugal Ambassador's public audience before the K. and Qu. together, after morning chapel, & their dinner in public.' The Company is conducted with old-fashioned honesty; 'we cannot have 1^d dividend, but we pay off our debts that if the Co: be broke nobody may be sufferers but those that are of it.' John's bitter complaint that English commerce is ruined by politicians meddling in merchants' affairs, 'for they like a flood break down all,' might have been written in the 'moral meridian' of our present controversies. There is some money left in the City nevertheless, for the people throng and press to see 'the rich clothes and jewels worn by the Lady Mayoress,' who has a famous 'collar of pearls, each as big as the top of one's finger.'

Nov. 3,
1679.

The City is in an unsettled state, and 'tis a wonder the Cittizens breake soe fast, being England hath had almost all the Trade of the World, since the warrs have been in Germany.' John writes to Edmund of a great fire in Constantinople, which has ruined many English traders there, and of a merchant in the City of London he had known at Aleppo, who 'is this weeke broke, and is 2000^l worse then nothing; these are misfortunes which you Country Gentlemen are not acquainted with, nor may you ever be, shall be the hearty prayer of yr most aff: brother.'

The influx of skilled foreign artisans after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 added to the eventual prosperity of the country, but for a time disturbed the labour market; John writes, 'Here hath been mutinous riseings, by the Weavers on this score, there is of late found out a loome that ridds worke soe fast, that one man with it can doe as much as 20 after the old fashion (by weh meanes all Ribboning would be much cheaper) this they pretend must

of necessity ruine many families amongst them, soe they will have these new looms burnt, & 2 they served so on Munday, & on tuesday went about ye same worke, but he that expected them, being fitted for a defence (of his property) kill'd one & wounded two more, whereat ye rest fledd, but yesterday, they return'd to him (who was alsoe fledd) & burnt his loomes in St Geo: fields in Southwarke, these riseings hath made the Watches be doubled all over the citty, besides some Comp^{es} of ye Trained bands, who every night keep guard on y^e Royall Exchange.' In contrast to the starving weavers, there is the competition of the rich for the possession of a fashionable toy: 'The Lord Geo: Berkely's Elephant (who is 5 foot & 4 Inches high) is to be sold by ye Candle at ye East India house sett up at £1000 & to advance £20 every bidding.'

Amongst Sir Ralph's child-friends, John's four little ones—Elizabeth (b. 1681), Mary (b. 1682), Ralph (b. 1683), and Margaret (b. 1685)—held a very special place in his heart. They were bright, attractive children, and every incident in their lives was reported to their grandfather. The eldest girl was his godchild; the old Doctor stood as his proxy, and wrote to Sir Ralph after the christening: 'As I have promised & vowed that y^r marvellous pretty Girle "Betty Verney" shall forsake the Divill & all his works, soe be sure y^u take care thereof when I shall be gathered to my ffathers.' Margaret is named after her great-grandmother, Mun and Nancy Nicholas and Hester Denton are the gossips. Cary wishes her a boy, 'for I find our sex is not much vallued in our age, bot before 'tis a woman I hope they will be better esteemed.'

The father and grandfather were in real distress when the 'footboy Harry being about the coach with Ralph who was in it, shut the Coach door upon the Child's fingers, quite pull'd off one of Ralph's nailes off of his fingers with some little bruises.' The hero of this adventure had now reached the mature age of three, and the family had scarcely recovered the shock of the death of Ralph, Mun's eldest son, when little Ralph and Mary fell dangerously ill. John's

anxieties were divided between them and his wife, who was looking sadly thin and worn; he tried to persuade her to go to Claydon while he remained in charge of the little ones. Sir Ralph, who was afraid of infection and fatigue for both of them, wrote urgently to John: 'I wish my Daughter were here & you with her, for you can do nothing about your children, 'tis not a Man's employment, but Woemen's work, & they both understand it & can performe it much better then any Man can doe. A good nursekeeper is better then Ten men, therefore think upon it before you resolve to stay with them, & God direct you for the best.'

'Molly and Ralph continue as they were, very ill of a feaver & pains with a short Cough very fast, they will not tell where their paines are, nor will they take anything but small Beare, nor that if anything be mingled with it, that we have trouble enough. Those things that they love so very well when in health as Sugar, Candy, Pruines etc. they will not now touch, nor will they let the Doctors touch their hands, but pray that neither their Unkle Dr. nor Mr. Gelthorpe the Apothecary may not come to 'em. God be their Phisitian,' writes the distracted father, '& spare their lives.'

Edmund at Claydon cannot hold out hopes that they will be 'Cured Hereabouts, for all our most able & Eminent Doctors of this Vicinage, Have Left off theyr Practice, & are Growne Vertuous Stoicks.'

The crafty 'Babbies,' who would neither be 'blouded nor vomited,' were perforce left to Nature and 'small Beare,' and falsified their physicians' predictions by making a good recovery. Their mother, whose ailments were less definite, was gradually getting weaker, although her bright spirits made it difficult for those who loved her to believe that there was any real cause for anxiety.

CHAPTER LII.

SOME BUCKS ELECTIONS.

1685.

THE sorrow for Charles the Second's death was very genuine; a long-suffering nation seemed to feel they could have 'better spared a better man.' 'Everybody is in a great damp since they have hard the doolfall news,' writes Sir Ralph's housekeeper on the succeeding Sunday; 'Mr. Butterfield is not well, so wee had neither praiers nor sarmon today at Middle Cladon.' Feb. 8,
1685

Alexander Denton sends up a messenger from Hillesden in haste to ask Sir Ralph's good counsel. 'The King's death is a great trouble to all his good subjects in the Country. . . . I believe never a better prince or man lived in the world or will be more missed than he, but beeing God Almighty was soe pleased to take him to himselfe, & rob this nation of soe great a blessing. . . . give me leave to aske whether it be my duty for to goe into mourning. . . . being in the Country, or if it be necessary for me, then whether my wife must doe the like, & whether it must be black cloth or Crape. I would not be singular.' He finally decides that a country squire may save the cost of 'blacks' by keeping much at home, as he hears the Coronation will be shortly, 'when everybody may be out of it againe.' Feb. 9,
1685.

Lady Gawdy writes: 'The generall calamety by the lose of our good King dus deeply strike my harte & makes my famely concerns but an attendant to the morning for him, but our new King has offered all the consolation wee could hope, by his gracious declarations; longe may hee live to be a new nursing father to the Church & his people as hee' Feb. 12,
1685.

has promised.' 'My sonn is returned in helth to his own home, but the loss of the late King has put new sadnes all over him, which I cannot but love him all the better for. . . . he is mine both by love and nature.'

Sir Ralph tells his friends that 'great application will be made to fill up all vacant places,' and advises Sir Charles Gawdy to come to town at once, for 'there are certaine Criticall Moments when men that observe them may build their Fortunes.'

His wife, Lady Mary, is too anxious about her father's health to enter into such schemes; Lord Denbigh is in Oxford for advice, and as Sir Ralph 'lives so near & knows all the eminent doctors there, shee longs to hear his opinion of Dr. Ratcliffe.' Sir Ralph assures her 'that Dr. Ratcliffe is generally esteemed for skill & practice one of the most eminent doctors in Oxford, & most constantly employ'd by all persons of Quality both in that country & at Astrop Wells.' John thought less well of him: 'Every one that hears of Dr. Ratcliff admires that Coz. Denton would send a 2nd time to so careless a physician, for certainly if no other Dr. in Oxford could please him, he had better send to London than to be valued under a bottle of wine or the seeing of a horse run . . . Dr. Ratcliff I hear intends to set up in London after he has taken his degree at Oxford.' His skill did not avail to prolong the earl's life beyond the summer.

Sir Charles Gawdy has a strange 'little gift' to ask of the new King: 'A country-man a mile off his house hanged himself, his personal estate was worth 150*l*.,' the King granted it him, but 'my Lord Castlehaven & severall others tho' the advantage was but small . . . so prest & re-begged it of the King' that Sir Charles fears his first promise will not hold. Sir Ralph recommends him as 'a most accomplit Gentleman, extreemly civil obligeing in all his expressions, & well worthy of his Maj^{ty}'s favour.'

John Verney was at Reading when King James was proclaimed, and the people 'made Bonfires and rang the Bells.' The satisfaction was short lived; the town had not done gossiping about the poverty of Charles's burial and

May 1,
1682.

the misfit of the coffin, when it was rumoured that 'three Scotchmen were clapt up in prison for treason, for saying a papist King should not raine long,' and it became apparent that the King's actions did not bear out his first judicious words. During the next three months the country was violently excited over the elections.

Since the Parliament summoned to Oxford in March 1681 and dissolved within eight days, the faithful Commons had never met, and as the time went on, it was evident that the Court party were prepared to use violent measures to secure a compliant majority. The boroughs had been attacked in the previous reign, charters had been forfeited, and when new ones were granted 'the elections of members were taken out of the hands of the inhabitants, and restrained to the corporation men' (Burnet). Buckingham had received such a charter in the previous July; and the two borough members were elected by the Mayor and twelve Aldermen, down to the Reform Bill of 1832.

The new Mayors and Sheriffs were all in the Government interest; the excitement was great in the country, and there was an unusual number of candidates. The Whigs by their ready belief in the calumnies of Titus Oates, and their cruel persecution of the Papists, had brought about a reaction against themselves. With a discredited and disheartened Opposition the country seemed in danger of losing some of its hardly won liberties, for want of leaders in the impending struggle. Sir Ralph in his seventy-third year, with the increasing conservatism of age, and a sobering experience of civil war and anarchy such as none of the younger generation possessed, was inclined to trust the new King, and was unwilling at first to stand against the Government. But the electioneering tactics employed on the King's side roused the best instincts of the old Parliament man, and a more personal motive may have quickened his decision. It was rumoured that the young Squire of Hillesden was eager to come forward, if Sir Ralph pronounced himself too infirm to stand again. The older members of the family were aghast at the presumption of a youth whose grandfather

had sat with Sir Ralph in the Long Parliament. Sir Ralph straightened his bent back, took posset for his cough, felt that he was not as old as he had imagined, and forthwith accepted the invitation from Buckingham.

Alexander Denton was in fact thirty years of age and the father of several children; but he understood the situation, anxiously cleared himself from any suspicion of disloyalty to his godfather and oldest friend, his only thought had been 'to keep out a stranger, thinking it as fit for me, as any such body,' and he now put his 'small interest' entirely at Sir Ralph's disposal.

Sir Ralph Verney therefore and his cousin of Stowe, who had won the seats for the Whigs in 1681, were to contest the Buckingham Borough again. Sir Richard Temple was not popular with his relatives at Claydon or at Hillesden—a busy schemer 'making all things secret, and keeping nothing secret'—but he was too influential a person to be overlooked; he had a following of moderate men of both parties, and protested moreover that he would rather stand with his old colleague and kinsman 'than all mankind besides.' The Tory candidates were Lord Latimer and Sir John Busby of Addington (the lawyer whom Mary Verney had seen during the troubles waxing rich when other people grew poor), now a county magistrate of some local importance. Two years before, Edmund Verney had been concerned with the politics of the borough, and wrote to John about them: 'I mett Sr Richard Temple at my ffathers, and at his Request I went with Him to Buckingham to Retreive a lost Game, about choosing a new Bayly, wch Wee Didd Effect, with much adoe, if the adverse Party There Had Gayned that Point of Choosing a Bayly among their owne Creatures, Sr Richard Temple Hadd never Been Chosen Member of Parliament at Buckingham more while Hee Lived in ali Human probability, Lett Sr Richard ffancye to Himselfe what He will to the Contrary: & I Think I Didd Him no smale service There, for Hadd I not Been with Him at that Time I may asseure you without Vanity That Sr Richards greatest Ennemy Robinson Hadd Been Bayly:

May 7,
1683.

Whereof now Mr. Hillesdon Sr Richard's ffreind is Bayly. . . .

'It was much discoursed of to Sr Richard's dishonour to sneake downe in his arch Ennemy Robinson's Coach, tho' Sr Richard vindicates Himself by saying He didd it to oblige Buckingham, yet no Body There understands it, But Reckons it an incomparable meanenesse of spirit in Sr Richard to stoope on yt fashion to Robinson on purpose as is said to sweeten the Bitternesse of his Enemy, for you must Know that this Robinson is a Lace Buyer and Hath sett up a fflying Coach betweene London and Buckingham: and this insolent ffellow at a ffayre at Bristol in a dispute betweene Him and one Hartly, another Lace Buyer and Burghesse of Bucks, publickly called Sr Richard Temple Rogue & Rascall and Knave &c.'

Sir Ralph's electioneering morality was at least two centuries in advance of his time. He was 'content to entertain the Mayor and Aldermen before the election in a reasonable manner, to join Sir Richard in giving £10 or £20 a piece to the poor, to pay all charges on the day, and, after it, to treat the Mayor & Aldermen & their Wives at a Dinner, at as high a value as Sir Richard thinks fit, by way of thanks to them for their love & kindness. But to treat the Mobile at all the Alehouses in the Parish & to make them Drunke, perhapps a Month beforehand, as is usual in too many places uppon such occasions, I shall not joyne in that Expençe, I had rather sit still, than gaine a place in Parliament by soe much debauchery.' Alexander Denton was 'clearly of Sir Ralph's opinion against barrels of ale,' holding 'that a man makes himself a slave that is chosen after that manner,' but with him it was merely a pious opinion that did not interfere with his habits, whereas Sir Ralph's principles and practice were alike the despair of his supporters.

Mun, who is in town with his father, precedes him to Claydon. Sir Richard has the writ brought to him at Uxbridge; he gave a crown to the bearer and Mun gave him another, '& five guineas more to Mr. Barnewell at

Aylesbury.' Sir Richard put the writ in his pocket till the moment should be propitious for delivering it. Mun entertains him at the White House, whence he writes to his father: ' . . . I come newly from wishing Sir Richard good night, he lyeth in my great Parlor Chamber; the Clock hath just struck one, & I begin to be sleepy, so I will to Bedd, but first say my Prayers for your good Health & prosperous voyage.'

March 10,
1685.

They meet again for the Assizes at Aylesbury, 'being the wettest & the windiest day that I have seene,' Sir Ralph writes to John. 'Tis a Mayden Assise, for none will bee hanged, but 3 or 4 small offenders are Burnt in the Hand. Your brother was of the Grand Jury, & soe was my Cozen Denton. The Sheriffe kept a noble shrevalty, Mr. Wood a Turkey Marchant is heere, I think he married one of the Sheriffs Daughters. Sir Tho Tyrrill's Butler that killed a Deerstealer that was stealing Rabets in Thornton Parke is found guilty of Manslaughter. Will Chaloner indicted one that lopped the Trees about the Schole house at Steeple Claydon, but the Grand Jury would not finde the Bill.'

March 13,
1685.

Nothing is talked of in the coaches and at the inns but the contests. The Whig candidates for the Borough of Aylesbury are quarrelling amongst themselves. Sir Ralph arriving at Amersham finds 'the Towne full of Ale & Noyse & Tobacco, being the Election day,' and late as it is, he drives on to Missenden for quiet. 'A Passenger says, Lee & Ingoldsby are like to carry it at Aylesbury,' he writes, 'noe body can yet determine it. My Cough & Cold is badd enough, God helpe me.' Sir Ralph had a recipe from Dr. R. Lydall of Oxford 'for a snayle Water, & a stronger Snayle Water for a cough,' with a 'Hemlock & oxycrate' poultice made by boiling vinegar and honey.

March 19,
1685.

Sir Ralph's boastful neighbour, Cousin Smith of Radcliffe, has gone up to contest the Shire of Middlesex. John Stewkeley is his agent, and writes to Sir Ralph: 'The candidates were Sir Wm. Smith, Sir Charles Gerard, Sir Hugh Middleton, Mr. Hawtry, Mr. Ranton & Mr.

Johnson of Mile End. Sir W. Smith came into the field attended with about 200 men, most on horseback, but tis thought not neare halphe of them had votes. He finding his party so inconsiderable in respect of the rest, desisted, & gave all his votes to Sir Hugh Middleton but he lost it by a 150 votes at least, & Sir C. Gerard & Mr. Hawtry who joyned interest carried it. They were both of them thought to be very honest gentlemen, this is the 3rd time Sir Hugh Middleton hath stood & spent a great deal of money & missed it.'

By the end of March Mun has delivered 'the Precept to the Mayor of Buck^m, so hee may go to Election when hee pleaseth. My father,' he writes to John, 'hath 7 of the 13 electors pretty firme to Him, so that if the Mayor doe not trick us by going to choose when some of our party are abroad upon their businesses, my father must needes carry it tho' I perceive Hee would willingly decline it. . . . Sir Richard Pigott is dead.' Lady Gardiner writes: 'I cannot bot lament Sir Richard Pigot, being a good man and an excellent old fation hous-Keeper, bot he was old & I pray God bles you with eas & happyness to his age & as many more years as God pleases.' Sir Ralph tells John how deeply he feels the death of this 'good old friend & neighbour; his Lady is very ill & my cousin Tom Pigot who is now heire to his uncle is somewhat amiss too & also severall of the servants, & all from colds, I pray God fit us all for Heaven.'

March 30,
1685.

April 1,
1685.

It was in the very crisis of the election contests, that friends and rivals met over the old knight's grave. 'Sir Richard Pigott was buried very honorably,' writes Sir Ralph to John, ' & at a considerable charge, with 2 new Mourning Coaches & a Hearse, one of which Coaches & the Hearse had 6 Horses apiece. Wee that bore up the pall had Rings, Scarfs, Hat-bands, Shammees Gloves of the best fashion and Sarsanet Escutcheons delivered to us; the rest of the Gentry had Rings, all the servants gloves. Wee had burnt wine & Biscuits in great plenty, all the very servants had burnt wine & Biscuit. I thank God my Cough is something better. I had forgotten to tell you that there were

April 5,
1685.

abundance of Escutcheons & all Sir Richard's servants were in mourning.'

Buckingham was now the scene of plots and counterplots and petty intrigues which lasted for many weary weeks. Sir Ralph's sons worked devotedly for him, each after his manner; Mun, gouty, cordial, and lavishly hospitable, freely sacrificed his digestion to his principles, and by constant carouses with the Buckingham electors, sought to counteract the ill effect of his father's austerity. He tells John 'as a very pleasant jest under the rose,' how after one of these feasts, 'Sir R. Temple & his man Monsieur Bennett, upon falling out, did exchange Dry Blows with one another,' as they drove back to Stowe at night in Sir R. Temple's coach.

The White House, lying as it did on the high road between Aylesbury and Buckingham, lacked not picturesque gatherings of county worthies booted and spurred, riding to and fro between these centres of political activity; such guests were sure of a hearty welcome and a potent stirrup-cup, in return for the last bit of election gossip. Sir Ralph sends Mun a fresh supply of sherry-sack and advises him to keep 'sugar ready and the nutmeg cut but not grated, for I see the Philistines are coming upon you.' 'Mr. Harry Wharton,' Mun writes, 'Sir Peter Tyrill & Captain Lile, Mr. Knowles & Mr. Haynes &c., called & drank at my Gates without alighting, & while they were there comes Sir Richard Temple, Sir Francis Leigh, Mr. Chesney, Mr. Anderson &c., & came all into my yard & drank; then our 5 Aldermen that were alighted at my house, remounted & waited on Sir R. T. to Buck^m. A little after he went away, my Lord Latimer went by in a Coach & six Horses, & about 14 Horse with him besides. My cosen Robin Dormer called in here, & says that he came from Addington & that Sir J. Busby is become a most mighty Tory.'

John, on the other hand, with his clear head and business capacity, obtained legal opinions on disputed questions, and bestirred himself amongst his town friends, whether lawyers, City merchants, or court ladies, to defeat

local wirepullers by using tactics in higher circles not unlike their own. The brothers took counsel together upon every detail that might help or hinder their father's return to Parliament.

Mun reports that 'if my Lord Latimer will lay downe 300*l*. for building the Townehall, He may prevayle to make his election sure.' This offer repeated at intervals 'much balances with mercenary spirits, and My Lord puts in hard to be chosen.' . . . 'There are 3 inveterate against us, Mr. Hugh Ethersey, Mayor, Mr. Hartley & one Alderman Atterbury, but I hope we shall get 7 on our side & then it is not much matter for the rest. Mr. Mayor hath all along done all he can against my father . . . tomorrow morning I shall be going early to Buck^m. ad explorandum Hostem.' If a voter declined to be bribed, at least he might be kidnapped, and Henry Hayward, a disreputable Buckingham barber, was suddenly arrested for debt. As he was wont to shave the Verneys, Edmund concluded that 'my barber' was a safe vote. Great efforts were accordingly made to pay his debts, and to get him out of the Fleet. When this was done, Hayward 'coacht it down to Buckingham with his daughter,' in great state; but knowing his value 'my barber' treated his patron with distant politeness, and did not wish to entangle himself with any pledges, or, as local opinion expressed it, 'the gaol bird has flown clear of them all.'

John Coleman and the rest of Sir Ralph's people are working hard for him in the borough, the Cook Nicholas is doing some efficient canvassing on his own account. 'The popular are resolved to set up two against the Bayliffe & Burgesses, & they that the Bayliffe & Burgesses chuse, the popular will not. . . . only the Cook thinks that one of the Constables being Sir Ralph's Saddler may be persuaded.'

The Addington carriages and horses are constantly seen in Buckingham; 'Sir John Busby rode through it twice, going and coming from Maydes Morton, and each time he alighted at the Mayor's house.' He is also paying court to the village of 'Leathenborough.' Sir Ralph can hardly hope to overtake his civilities; Lord Latimer's men are

March 23,
1685. making their last efforts, but 'my Lord will not come from town unless he can get 7 of the 13 to subscribe for him.'

April 2,
1685. John sends a bit of gossip on the all-absorbing topic of the seven Buckingham votes. 'Being yesterday at Nancy Nicholas' she pulled out a letter, tore out the name & bad me read it, twas I saw a Clerk's hand & began Sir.' Then the story of these infinitely petty intrigues is told again, how there are six votes for Sir Ralph and six for Lord Latimer, how 'a Draper being incognito had declared for Sir Ralph, but that this should prove of no avail.' Nancy left the room, and John, determined to discover the writer, flew to the place 'where the crumpled paper lay she had flung into the fire, but lighting on a Scotch coale it tumbled off into the Chimney, so I took it up & opened it and found the name to be Wm. Baker, he that married Mr. Ethersey's daughter.' Sir Ralph replies that Mr. Ethersey, the mayor, 'is wholly governed by my Lord Chief Justice . . . his sisters are heartily for me & cry & speak openly how much they are ashamed of their Brother. . . . I wish I had never been concerned in the business, for tis very Chargeable and woonderful Troublesome.' Jack Ethersey, the attorney, is busy at Buckingham with his brother the mayor; 'Chaque Diable a son tour,' writes Jack Verney, 'once I was desired to be his friend when he putt in for a place in the Citty & I recommended him to some of the Chief Grocers for to be a Clark of their hall, & it may be in my power again (before he be a Judge) to doe him an other kindness or its contrary, which of 'em he may expect will be according to his carriage to you. . . . Lady Osborne told me my L^d of D[evonshire] rails exceedingly at Sir R. T. and saith he will bring him on his knees in the house for keeping the precept 6 weeks after he had it, before delivered, and much such stuff. . . .'

Sir Ralph replies, 'Lord Latimer kept the precept 5 weeks when it was noe crime & tis usually down in very many places. . . . Sir Rich. kept it but 17 dayes after hee first had it, many persons keep it much longer, therefore

I beleeve Ly. Osborne understands not what she says about it.'

Stewkeley writes that 'L'Estrange & one Mr. Chaney, a very young man he is of y^r Winslo, & a mighty favouritt of the L^d Ch: Just. Jeff:'s are chosen for Winton.'

John had been running after Mr. Fall, a London solicitor known to the aldermen at Buckingham, who might help if he could go down to work for Sir Ralph, but he finds him 'tyed by the leg to the Treasury office.' 'Dr. Denton says that the towne of Buck^m was anciently against our family,' John continues, 'My Grandfather having gotten the Assizes from Buck^m to Wickham, & that you had angered them in a piece of Justice. But the Dr. being just then going into the Lady Sherard's door, I had not time to know of him in what, or to pump out whether he said this of his own knowledge or had it from your good friend in a corner A. D[enton].' In 1679 'the king promised L^d Latimer that the Assizes should be at Buck^m, but Sir Thos. Lee got Monmouth to beg they should be at Aylesbury, which was granted.' History repeats itself; some two hundred years later, Sir Harry Verney, when candidate for the same seat, was reproached with having removed the Quarter sessions from Buckingham to Aylesbury.

Sir Ralph was going about in Buckingham, coughing in the cold March winds, longing to be out of the ale and the noise, and peremptorily sent for to return, whenever he sought a little rest at Claydon. There was always a special reason. He must not be absent on market days; the mayor had complained that he had not called upon him of late; my Lord Latimer's man had given the wives and daughters of the burgesses a treat very recently, and Sir Ralph should do the same; and so on. Cook Nicholas felt sadly that his artistic cold collations were thrown away upon the thirsty aldermen. 'Wine is the most acceptable treat for them, with Anchois or such like thing, to draw downe Liquor.'

'I wish Buckingham election were over,' writes Lady April 1, Gardiner, 'and that you might have time to mend your ¹⁶⁸⁵

health, which is of chifest moment to me, not bot I hope all will goe as I wod have it . . . there is like to be a good time for blistering, warm whether being best for that, & I am shur if you due not begin to take the asses milk quickly, you will have bot a short tim to take it.'

John was also urgent with his father to be blistered, but Sir Ralph felt that he could not stand any more worries till after the polling day. His chief solace was an aromatic 'dish' which he made for himself at night; 'a noble fuddler of coffee,' Dr. Denton called him. He had laid in a frugal provision of two half-pound packets of coffee at 3s. a lb., which he hoped would carry him through his fatigues; but he was far from being at the end of them. It was now known that the polling for Buckingham would be delayed until after the Knights for the Shire had been chosen.

So far the Whigs had done well in the Bucks boroughs, but the great county struggle was yet to come. Dr. Denton reports 'mad work in many elections the Lord Chief Justice [Jeffreys] behaves himself bravely in all his circuit,' which he made into an electioneering tour; he was then detained in Essex, his temper being further soured by 'a fit of the stone.' Jeffreys was known to the Verneys; Mun had dined with him in town, and he owned a house in the county, Bulstrode Manor. Charles II. visited him in 1678, ' & causing Sir George Jeffreys to sit down at table with him, he drank to him seven times.' His favour at Court was still in the ascendent, and he was already famous for the violence and brutality of his temper. He was resolved to bring the terrible power of his personal influence to bear, in order to overawe the electors at Aylesbury. This contest was felt to be a crucial one. The candidates were Lord Brackley, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. Hackett. Lord Brackley, by his own merit, and as son of the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Bridgewater, had won the support not only of the Whigs but of most of the moderate Tories of the county. His mother, Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, was famous for 'her winning behaviour and most obliging conversation,' her beauty, wit, and piety, and Lord Brackley seems to have inherited something of her charm.

Thomas, eldest son of Philip Lord Wharton, was a man of a very different type; he had a great reputation for wealth and extravagance. A popular sportsman, he had just been thrown by a rearing horse at Newport races, but recovered in time to rally his friends for a still more exciting contest. Able and unscrupulous, he represented a powerful Whig family living close to Aylesbury; he was personally obnoxious to King James, as having brought up the Exclusion Bill from the House of Commons to the Bar of the House of Lords.

Thomas Hackett, the Tory candidate, 'an unknown young gentleman of the neighbourhood of Newport Pagnell,' was Jeffreys' tool in his stubborn resolution at all costs to keep out Wharton. In case this should fail, it was reported that the Lord Chief Justice, 'with the rest of his gang, would at the last promote Hackett's election for Buckingham.'

Sir Ralph sent word to his agent to work up the tenants, and peremptorily desired Mr. Butterfield to exert himself in Mr. Wharton's interest 'among his brethren.' The rector, usually so compliant, returned an evasive answer; he would see which side would most benefit the Church; meanwhile he and Mr. Townshend were reported to be very busy; it was evident that the clergy would vote Tory. Persons of quality are bestirring themselves all over the county; 'my Lady Peter Tyrrell,' Sir Walter Raleigh's granddaughter, has been met 'in her coach & 4, driving furiously' to London: and Sir Thomas Bludworth has been heard to say that 'his brother the L^d Ch: Just: Jefferys will be at the Election of Knights of the Shire.'

Whatever weariness Sir Ralph confessed to in private, he was at his post when the great struggle commenced; his letter describes the unscrupulous tactics the Lord Chief Justice was prepared to employ:

'Alisbury, Thursday night.

'On Tuesday night I came heather, I thought the Pole would have been continued here till the Election had been ended, but some say Mr. Wharton having many more voices than Mr. Hackett, my L^d. Ch. Justice got the Sheriff to

April 9,
1685.

adjourn the Poll to Newport (which is 15 very long miles from hence) in the heart of Mr. Hackett's friends, & tis thought it will be adjourned on Sat. morn^g. from thence to Buckingham where Mr. Hackett has a good many friends, because next Sat. is Newport Fayre, & it would be inconvenient to have the Fayre & the pole together. Most are of opinion that this adjournment will lose my L^d Brackley 2 or 300 voyces, that cannot goe soe farre. Therefore my L^d Brackley was against it, but my L^d. Chief Justice like a Torrent carryes all before him. Some say that if Mr. Hackett is worsted in these parts then my Lord will get the Sheriffs to adjourn it to Beconsfield, where my L^d Chief Justice has an Interest, being not farre from his House, but this is but a conjecture. Some things have happened here which are not fit to be put into a letter. . . . I have sent for my Coach & Horses to be here very early for I cannot goe soe farre as Newport, but I intend to go to Buck^m. on Saturday if the poll be adjourned thither.'

Lord Macaulay has related the sequel: how Tom Wharton's friends reached Newport, only to find every available lodging engaged, and provender for man and beast already bought up; 'the Whig freeholders were compelled to tie their horses to the hedges and to sleep under the open sky, in the meadows which surround the little town.' But Jeffreys had misjudged his men; Wharton was full of pluck and was ready to spend 1,500*l*. a day; the result of the first day's polling was that 'my Lord Brackley had 2,430 voices & odd, Mr. Wharton had 1,804 with many hundreds yet to poll & Mr. Hackett had 1,207 & noe more to poll'; and so the two first were declared at Newport to be duly elected, and Jeffreys' further schemes fell through. More even than against the triumphant Wharton, the Lord Chief Justice's rage was directed against the frail figure of the old man who spoke and wrote so temperately, but whose very presence at Aylesbury reminded the Bucks electors of the traditions of their best days. Sir Ralph's friends had only one regret, that he had missed the final triumph at Newport; but he failed not to hear of 'the greate grieve of my L^d. Ch Justice

who in his passion fell upon many of the gentry, but most upon me, tho' I was not there, I was a Trimmer & soe he would tell my L^d. Keeper who was my friend.'¹ A few days later Wharton, the hero of the hour, won 'the four score pounds plate at Brackley races. T'was a gold tumbler, a fork & a handle for a knife. Sir Charles Shugburgh & Mr. Griffith ran against him.'

Cary Gardiner is jubilant, and only longs to encounter 'this demi-fiend, this hurricane of man,' as the ballad-makers called Jeffreys. 'I hear many accusations against you my Lord Chief Justice maks, bot I bileve only whot I think, not pinning my faith to his girdle, I pray God he may not use any ill courses to set you a side the election. . . . I hate the world every day more & more, & find most falcchod in church, pretending to religion.' 'I wish I could come in company with that mighty man, that spits his venham in every place at you,' she writes to her brother; 'I long to see him bot not out of love, bot fancy I could hit him more homb then hee can you, & wod due & mildly too; hee deserves to bee told his erour tho' not afronted for his Master's sake, who I think hee dus great predygys to instead of sarving; and fancy it will be thought so in time, raling not becomeing his grandeur. I would goe forty miles to meet him amonxt parsons of quollity, as for the Maior he is a pityfull fellow . . . old as I am I hope I shall see them both under other sircumstances. I wish them better before death seizes them.'

April 12,
1685.

April 15,
1685.

Mun 'sate up all night in Buckingham drinking with the High Sheriff, Sir R. T. & Mr. Mayor' after the county victory, and Captain Pigott 'lay ill at Aylesbury after drinking too hard all through the election.' The Eure heiresses have rival candidates for their borough of Malden; Captain Fairfax is returned and not Mr. Wortley, by which it appears that 'Cousin Danby has got the victory over Cousin Palmes.'

Public attention was for the moment fixed upon the

¹ 'The surest way to propitiate the Lord Chief Justice was to treat the Lord Keeper with disrespect.'—Macaulay, *Hist. Eng.* i. p. 454.

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1685.

great preparations made for King James's coronation on St. George's Day. The Duke of Ormond has arrived, 'many persons of Quality attended him into town, there were about 40 coaches.' 'His Maj^{tie} dined by invitation on board the Loyall James an East India Shipp, but the Entertainment was extremely mean & Bread & Cheese both wanting, as the report goeth.'

Penelope Osborne has ordered a new chariot on which her father's arms are to be painted, and her horses at Claydon are to be fetched up from grass and put 'in flesh' as fast as possible that they 'may be no discredit to the Coach.' She needs it urgently as she has a swelling on one foot 'as bigg as a Wolnut.' Lame and withered as she is, she begs Sir Ralph specially to remember her 'Beauty Water.' Penelope has crowds of callers, ladies of the highest fashion having suddenly remembered her existence, as she is 'known to have a good interest' with Henry's old friend 'the Earl of Peterborough, father in law to my Lord Marshall,' who has seats to assign for the coronation. Penelope is not nice in these matters, and enjoys the situation. Young Ralph and Edmund, with Denton Nicholas and a number of undergraduate friends are posting from Oxford to London, where the Verney lads are hospitably entertained by Aunt Gardiner.

'I think if both the brothers come,' she writes, 'they must ly in my back rome, they will not be with us before 5 a'cllok in the morning; my neveugh Ralph must bring his best cloths, none must bee ther in blak, that is forbid in print by my Lord Martiall. All the scaffolds are lined & canopys over them to keep of rain, so all is very fine, all parsons visits the places of show to see the manner of it & many as will not be ther that day gos now. . . . My Cossin Georg Nicholas has been to see the preparations, & says tis not so fue as 100,000 people may stand to see it on the scaffolds in West^r Hall & the Pallis yard & in all the Church-yard of St. Margaret's at West^r & all the hustings along & many comes from beyound sea to see it, which you may guess the reson of.'

Your grandsons shall be with me,' she writes again to Sir Ralph, 'wher my Lady Anne Grimston & her daufers are, & Mrs. Bartley & Lady Tichborn & her daufers with more of my frinds, whom I am to conduct tomorrow to the place of standing wher we sit up all night, chusing it as the less disorder, becaus after 5 a clok on thursday morning no coach shall be soffered to pass Whithall & tis bilieved no coach shall pass after wensday night, & to avoid ill crouds we intend to sit up, & your grandsons shall have their sleep out beefore they goe. My Lady Warick saw the quens crown isterday, & ther is to the vallew of neer 200,000*l.* uppon it, & shee will bee all over Jewels besids; never any quen was so richly decked, all conclude by many thousands, a world of Jewels shee borrows, a fair day is now chifly wisht for. On Saturday the king was pleasd to send to my Lord Pois to let him know he had the sword the pope sent King Hary the eight, and that he should have the honour to carry it beefore him on ister day, for the sord as was Carryed before the late king is layd Aside, Heare is nothing bot great & glorious things publickly talked of, bot I doubt not bot ther is thousands as prays only for Immortall glory weh in god's good time grant to you & all yours & me & all mine weh shall conclud this from yr. affec. sister & sarvant Cary Gardiner. Sent this tuesday morning expecting a croud of people this day & tomorrow.' The weather was dry and unusually hot for April, propitious for a function. 'Tis said the King will walk to his Parliament thorow King St. in his Parliament Robes & that all the Peeres shall be the same with their coronets, purposely to gratifye his people that they may see a splendid show.' 'Profuse where he ought to have been frugal, and niggardly where he might pardonably have been profuse,'¹ the procession from the Tower was omitted by James on account of expense, while he lavished double the money on the Queen's trinkets. On Easter Sunday 'the rites of the Church of Rome were once more after an interval of 127 years performed at Westminster with regal splendour.' The streets swarmed with priests,

¹ Macaulay, *History of England*, i. 472.

while the Lord Mayor, who applied for the ancient right of representing the City as cupbearer at the coronation, 'was told by the Lord Keeper the claim was not good now the charter is forfeited.' The reception of the special Embassy from Holland was badly bungled. 'As they came up the River,' John writes, 'they lowered their flagg to the King's Castles, but put it up againe, on wch the then Gov^r fired 2 bullets one a head tother astern, but they not taking on't downe he fired soe again. Then the Embassadors (pretending whilst they are on board tis not usuall to take it quite downe) came on shoare and twas taken downe presently. . . . Van Sitters here joynd with the two Dutch Embassadors that came over ; they are in great state, having each 6 Pages, 10 footmen & other Retinue answerable, & have taken a great house in St. James' Square but a publique entry is not granted them.'

'I am glad the Elections & Coronation is over,' murmurs old Betty Adams, 'ther was so much discors about them that one would thinck that thay forgot to tolck of aney thing els, but nothing can make me forget my soroes.'

Sir Ralph could not yet put elections aside, the borough had still to be won, and Jack Stewkeley writes of the 'foul play played Sir Ralph at Buck^m. by staving off the election and not allowing him to know the probable date of it.' 'All imaginable endeavours have been used to get over any one of his seven Voyces, but they are as firm to us as rocks,' Mun writes, 'but we know what tricks they may play us, & then there is no fence for a flaile but a Barne Door.' It soon appeared that a formidable plot was brewing ; the mayor threatened to report one of the Whig aldermen, Dancer, a tanner, to the King for words against the Government ; if Dancer could be summoned to London on however trumpery a charge, the election could be held in his absence and Sir Ralph would lose the seat. The only hope of defeating this trick was by making it public, and Sir Ralph, on behalf of himself, his colleague and his party, desired his son John to wait upon the Lord Chief Justice, to offer bail for Dancer's appearance as soon as the election should be

over, but to protest against any of the aldermen being forced to absent themselves before that day. Jack hears that 'Carter a tipstaffe has gone to Buck^m. to bring up Dancer'; he has been talking over the matter with Ethersay the attorney. 'I find him a Rude, Passionate fellow, & Sir Richard tells me his brother the Mayor is ten times more passionate than he, I wonder how Sir Rich. who is boyling water & the Mayor doe, to set their horses together . . . hot-headed people that can't speak sense, hate to heare it.' 'Ethersay saith you called the town of Buckingham a nest of Bastards & Beggars—I told him I could not believe a man of your wisdom should speak such ill words . . . then he said you never spent 20 shillings in Buck^m. in 20 years—but I found he meant in Ale, & truly I doe believe it, but my Lady Gardiner told him that he knew you hated to goe to any alehouse. He stands much upon the honour of his family & saith 'twas formerly the best in that town, except Sir Richardson, I fancy his ancestors came out of Wales, & he retains still some Welsh hott blood in him.' Sir Ralph replies that the absurd stories of his being 'against Buck^m. are some 11 years, & the latest 6 yeares, old . . . tis true I have not spent 20 shillings in Ale (except on the occasion of this and my former election), nor shall I doe it if I live 20 yeares longer, but I am sure the men of Buck^m. have had several 20*l*. of me for Work, & for things that I have bought of them. . . . I am noe way fond of this imployment, beleeeve me those that are out of the House are much happier then those that are in; & within few months you will bee of my mind I'll warrant you.' Cary hears that Sir Ralph's name has been brought up at the Council table, and that Sir R. Temple complains passionately that by his friendship with him he has lost the King's favour. The plot against Dancer goes on, and he and another alderman are to be turned out of the Commission of the Peace.

Sir Ralph and Sir Richard Temple desired John to get counsel's opinion about the Buckingham Charter, and to give a guinea or two for it. He went first to Henry Pollexfen, but that wise man would not meddle with the case, as soon as

May 5,
1685.

he had looked into it. 'In vain,' John says, 'I played with the gold in my fingers'; he protested that 'now Reason signifies nothing he will have nothing to do with such matters.' Pollexfen had shown considerable courage in defending the City Charter; he was afterwards the champion both of the Seven Bishops and of Baxter the Nonconformist, and was accounted 'a thorough-stitch enemy to the crown,' but he had reasons of his own for not meddling with an election in which Jeffreys was so much interested, and before the end of the summer he was employed by the Lord Chief Justice to conduct the prosecutions after Monmouth's rebellion.

Baffled here, John turned to another eminent man, John Holt, son of the Recorder of Abingdon, and educated in the Free School there, whom Sir Ralph must have known well; but he too was looking to Jeffreys for promotion. He listened coldly, and scratched his head, but was persuaded to read the papers ' & said sure the man (Ethersay) was madd for an Alderman to talk soe, this he repeated 2 or 3 times,' but when pressed to say whether he would give an opinion, he doubted whether he had the time, remembered that 'it was the last day of Terme & that he must go visit the Judges.' John left the papers with him that he might consider them at leisure. But when he called again, Holt 'seemed rather more cold, & said he would not give anything under his hand or have to doe in the case.' John's labours were not yet over, some affidavits were required from the Lord Keeper's Office; 'I went 10 times for a copy of 'em, still could not have it, one Secretary had 'em not, another was gone out to Whitehall, I came againe & he was at a Taverne where at last I found him; they cost 6 shillings, that is 5^s to y^e Secretary & 1^s to the Porter.' Serjeant Leake, whom John caught at last, and persuaded to look into the case, was most discouraging. He said, ' 'twas nothing now to turn out men, many in a day, to disfranchize 'em, and then there's no remedy but by a writt of mandamus, which before that can restore them, the Election will be over & the turn served.'

Holt was soon after made Recorder of London; both he

and Pollexfen sat with Sir Ralph in the Convention Parliament, and became distinguished judges. But though even the Whig lawyers declined to help them, the Corporation of Buckingham proved less compliant than the Government expected, and refused to join 'in soe foule a practice against 2 of their brethren.'

The resistance to Sir Ralph suddenly collapsed; Sir John Busby seems to have been thrown over by his own party, and the defeated county candidate, Mr. Hackett, never appeared. Sir Ralph writes to John at the end of the long day, having got back to Claydon at ten o'clock: 'This morning Sir R. T. & myself were elected at Buck^m without any noyse or trouble. Mr. Atterbury was not there, nor did my Lord Latimer come down, so the whole 12 Electors signed the book for Sir R. T. & 7 signed for me, after which the Mayor sent for us upp into the Towne Hall, & declared the Election & sealed the Indenture or Returne with the Towne Seale & then all the 12 Electors put their hands to it, & delivered it to one to carry to the Sheriffs tomorrow morning. The Populace went to the Towne Hall & civilly demanded the Pole for my L^d Latimer & my Cozen Greenfield of Foscut, but the Mayor told them hee could not grant it, soe they went away & poled a little while & then seperated without noyse or tumult.'

May 15,
1685.

When the same members had been returned for Buckingham in 1681, they were expected to give 'to each clerk that took the poll, being foure, a guinea,' 'to the men that got superscriptions for them, the like, being 3 or 4 & also to pay for drawing the intentions and the exposition all the day of the Election,' besides their agents' expenses 'in riding about & paying of messengers,' upon which Colman expressed his opinion that 'tis a great charge to be chosen a Parliament man.'

CHAPTER LIII.

THE OLD 'PARLIAMENT-MAN.'

1685.

May 21,
1685.

SIR RALPH has taken his seat again, and has forgotten his ailments in the interest of resuming his House of Commons work. He is sitting by Sir Charles Gawdy and other old friends; and goes down to Westminster so early that those who want to see him must call before 8 o'clock in the morning. He is lodging at 'Capt. Paulden's house, over against the Crosse Walke in Holborn Row in Lincoln's Inn feilds.' The Commons are agitated with questions of orthodoxy, they desire the King 'to put the Lawes in Execution against all dissenters from the Ch. of England whatsoever. . . . The House sits not this day being Holy Thursday, nor tomorrow being the 29th of May.'

May 26,
1685.

May 28,
1685.

'Will you be in London,' Sir William Petty, the generous optimist, writes to a friend, 'when the Parliament sits, & help to do such things for the common good that no King since the Conquest besides his present Majesty can so easily effect?'

John is chiefly anxious that his father should not be overtired; he has 'little stomach to his food.' 'I would not have you goe soe much on foot . . . walking in London differs much from docing so in the Country open aire. In London the roughness of the treading, the rubbing by the people, & the bustle of 'em, wearies the body, & giddydes & dozeth the head; and if you must walke, why should you not goe in your Coach to Hampstead, Highgate or any other way & there alight & walke for such a convenient time as you shall judge fitt & soe home againe with some friend to bear you

company & talke to, but really, to walke about the streets I cannot think it wholesome for you at all.'

'Childe,' replies Sir Ralph, 'I thank you kindly for your care of my Health, but the bustle of a parliament will not suffer me to take the aire at such a distance, & especially at first when we are generally tyed to more constant attendance, either on the House or his Maj^{ties} person. I goe not on foote but when the weather is faire & coole, & then I doe well to favour my Horses & to save my Coach, which is more prejudiced by one day here, than it probably can in Tenn in the Country, the Stones being ready to shake it in pieces. . . . divers petitions against Elections were brought in—my cousin Palmes brought in one for Malton & my L^d Latimer & my Cousin Greenfield brought in another against Sir R. T. & mee for Buck^m,' and Mr Hackett petitioned against Mr. Wharton's return.

The laws which the House of Commons wanted to put in force against Papists were formidable weapons against Protestant dissenters of Whig proclivities. After Monmouth's rebellion 'Noncon: ministers' were more than ever persecuted; 'considerable numbers of them were actually in the late Rebellion, fit Chaplains indeed for such a Mushroom King & fit Spiritual Guides for such lewd Rebels.' Lord Abingdon is keen 'to ferret them out.' A distressed appeal reaches Sir Ralph from 'Samuel Clarke a Non: Con:' whose career might stand as an epitome of the changes which England had passed through in the life of one generation. A highly educated Cambridge man 'of great moderation,' he had lost his fellowship at Pembroke Hall by refusing to sign the engagement under the Long Parliament. During the Protectorate, he was presented to the rectory of Grendon Underwood by Squire Pigott of Duddershall, in succession to old Thomas Howe. He had the reputation of being an excellent preacher and a learned Biblical scholar; he was so much opposed to the high-handed action of the Church of England after the Restoration, that he and his two sons gave up their livings in 1662. Philip, Lord Wharton, protected him at Winchendon 'from the face of the spoiler.

June 25,
1685.

Persecution drove him further and further from Episcopacy, but he devoted his blameless old age to compiling a Bible Concordance and other works; he founded what in Puritan phrase was called 'a gathered Church' in his own house at Wycombe, and died suddenly while conducting the devotional exercises of his people in 1701. Being held by this time 'in much esteem,' the Church, so unkind a stepmother to Clarke in life, received him back in death, and he was buried in the chancel of the parish church at Wycombe.¹ But when he wrote to Sir Ralph in 1685, he had just been seized in the parish of his old patron at Doddershall. '3 Troopers of my L^d Brackly's Troop, brought a warrant signed by 6 Dep: Lieftenants,' Sir John Busby being of the number, . . . 'to secure Mr. Kent [one of the obnoxious aldermen who had voted for Sir Ralph], Mr. Nit (who is Mr. Hampden's chaplain) & myself.' They were detained at the Red Lion Inn at Aylesbury, and could find no magistrate to whom they could appeal to be tried or released. Clarke having been known to Sir Ralph a great while, and never having given cause for 'the least umbrage of suspicion,' begs him to intercede for them with the Lord Lieutenant. 'Tis true our confinement is not strict & we are treated with all manner of civility by the officers here, yet not being conscious of having ever either don or spoken anything which may deserve so much, I doe humbly sue for a discharge.'

The magistrate and the dissenter found the rigour of their natural relations to each other much softened by the gardening tastes they had in common; it was not the first time that Sir Ralph had saved the Noncon. from the persecutions of the law, and the latter, while deploring Sir Ralph's prelati- cal leanings, allowed that he was an accomplished grower of grapes. As David had accepted the protection of Achish, King of Gath, the elect in these evil days might do well to propitiate so kindly a Philistine, and accordingly some choice vines reached Claydon from Winchendon, that Mr. Clarke considered to be 'exactly season'd & suited to

¹ Gibbs' *Worthies of Bucks*, p. 103; Parker's *History of Wycombe*, p. 162.

Sir Ralph's palate,' and which he begged him to accept from 'A real Honourer of your worth & your highly lowly servant.'

Sir Ralph's 'rarities' in his house and garden have more than a local reputation; he writes to John (in 1681):

'When your Brother & I were gon to Radcliffe about 12 o'clock, there came hether a very handsome young and gentile person, with a Gentleman and 3 more servants in livery; all extreamly well Horsed, & armed with Pistolls, & Carbines; & desired to see the House, the Church, Gardens, & Parke; & went all over the Roomes, & other places, and told my Bucks, & would goe to the Hay Ricks, to see how I had contrived it that the younger & weaker Deere might come in; & sayd hee knew mee very well, & spake of mee & my Election at Buckingham, very perticularly; but neither Hee nor any of his 4 servants would tell his name, nor discover who hee was, though they were severally asked, but hee still replied, "Doe not you know mee? Sure you doe." They Dranke a Botile of sack, very civilly & went away, & noe body knowes either who hee was, or whence hee came, or wether hee went.'

John Verney and his wife, at Rusthall, Tunbridge Wells, met the impetuous Whartons again: 'Yesterday morning Aug. 16, Capt. Henry Wharton comeing to the Wells, bade a Coach-1685. man drive out of the way for the D. of Norfolk was comeing, but the coachman haveing broke some harness, said the D. of N. must waite if he came, or words to that effect, on which Harry W. Knockt him downe, then Dr. Jefferyes (Broth: to the L^d Ch. J.) lookt out of the Coach & askt the reason of the action; the Captaine bade him come out of the Coach, & he would serve him soe too: this hath angered his Lordshipp, but I presume (for the Duke's sake) tis husht up. Thom. Wharton is here. . . . This Place is very full of company, soe that lodgeings are very hard to be gotten & consequently deare, as are all provisions here. The Prince hath returned to the Court but the Princess is still here.

Sir Ralph replies from Claydon: 'The rashness of Capt. Aug. 23, 1685.

Harry Wharton brings him into more disputes & troubles then can bee expressed, as hee growes older I hope hee will bee every day more weary of such Brangline Broyles. On Thursday next is the race at Quainton Meadow then his brother Tom, & perhaps Harry Wharton too may probably be there.' 'Our country talk,' writes Mun a little later, 'is that my Lord Scaresdale, L^d Spencer, Mr. Tho: Wharton & his brother Harry went to Ethrop, & whipped the Earle of Carnarvan in his owne house & didd some other Peccadillios in his Castle besides. . . Capt. Bertie was sent for to relieve the Castle & I hear he did come accordingly, but the Bravos were all gone first.

Sir Ralph's own life was saddened by the loss of a friendship that could never be replaced. 'Sir,' wrote John Stewkeley, 'the good Lady Gawdy is dead.'

Their correspondence had continued till within a few days of her death: 'The honour you allow me of your friendship,' she writes, 'gives me this liberty thus to follow you into all places where you reside to make my acknowledgments of your favours, & to lay my thankes at your feete, I am hopeless Sir, ever to sarve you, but to bee found in the traine of your obleged is A pleasur I will never mis by my neglect.'

Lady Gawdy had been very suffering and sleepless, but she wrote bravely asking her old friend's help, to wind up some money matters which concerned her younger children, that her eldest son and executor 'may have his sorrow & debts for me made as easy as I can to him.' . . . 'Your obleging letter makes my spirit diligent to pass out at all ports, to meete you with the most grateful reception.' 'Twenty years before Sir Ralph had said of her that she managed her affairs with 'temper, justice & moderation even beyond his expectation in all the wayes of kindnesse & friendship.' She now commended her children and grandchildren to his care, thanked him once more for his counsel and kindness during her thirty-five years of widowhood, and begged him to burn her letters, that 'no stranger eye may censure them hereafter'; she had burnt all his for this reason.

Sir Ralph evaded a promise; 'My Respects like Rivers pay tribute to the Ocean of your Favours,' he writes, but he was then in town, and the letters were in the country treasured as his most precious possessions. In their faithful and noble friendship there had been nothing to conceal; this was the only request of hers which he did not feel bound to grant; at least the letters are at Claydon still.

'Lady Vere Gawdy was four days a dying,' in grievous pain, but mistress of herself to the end.

Sir Charles informs Sir Ralph that 'she left this world on Monday morning, & this poor family miserable in the want of her. . . . Upon my returne from London I found my Deare Mother so apparently mending for the first two days, as truly I thought I had ground for those hopes, which God knows the zeal of my soul formed into wishes for her recovery. Butt after that little intermission, the assaults of her diseases grew furious & such a contest between her payne & her cheerfulness, as I beleieve you scarce ever saw. Her patience & devotion are impressions upon me nothing can eradicate, her tenderness & care for every one, nay her abilitie, lasted as longe as her sences & they parted not from her till her life. She had in her muf, which shee always wore when out of her bed, a letter of yours & one of mine.'

July 21,
1685.

The spring of 1685 had been hot and dry; no rain fell at Claydon for many weeks; Sir Ralph's gardener, Henry Teem, was weary of watering; the strawberries were fading and the peas would hardly keep for his worship's return. Mistress Anne Woodward, one of the Denton sisters, who was accustomed to distil 'the Cordyall Water' for Sir Ralph that he would not willingly be without, mourns over her withered herbs 'which have little or no goodness in them,' and the 'rosemary which is quite gone out of our country, that will be much missed in the Water.'

In the sultry days of this parched June, the terrible tragedy of Monmouth's landing, his brief success and crushing defeat, was being enacted in the West of England. The home counties shared in the excitement; Betty Adams

writes that Baddow is full of soldiers, 'our malisha being all in arms.'

Parliament was suddenly prorogued in July, and Sir Ralph went down at once into the country. On revisiting Buckingham he was escorted back to Claydon with torches, and caught cold, as his family remarked with severity, because he would not suffer the glasses of his coach to be put up.

July 15,
1685.

Mun, suffering and depressed, with gout in the eyes and a terribly ulcerated leg, remained behind in the doctor's hands: 'Mee thinkes this place is very uncouth to me now you are gone out of it,' he writes to his father, '& my Heart feels a kind of Horror of it, for want of the usual & dayly enjoyment of your delightful Company, which it Loves beyound expression & ever will. . . . My eyes continue bad enough still, I have clapt a plaister of Bergamo Pitch on the Pole of my Neck, which I think hath done me some good tho' not much.' John writes the same day: 'Yesterday the late Duke of Monmouth, & the late Lord Gray & the German were brought Pinnioned Prisoners in 2 Coaches (by my Lord Lumley) to Fox Hall, thence by Lt. Dartmouth in Barges to Whitehall, & after some stay there in the Barges to the Tower.' The next letters are full of the horror of Monmouth's end, 'on the weeping Saint's day,' as Lady Gardiner says. 'After begging mercy of His Majesty in terms very abject,' he had roused himself on the fatal morning to meet death with dignity. On July 15, 'between 10 & 11 in the morning, he was executed on Tower Hill. On the Scaffold there were 4 divines, the Bps. of Ely, Bath & Wells, Dr. Tenison, & Dr. Hooper, he said little but answers, & did sometimes turn from them when they asked him Severall Quest^{ns}. one after another; but he dyed very resolutely, neither with Affectation nor dejectedness, but with a courageous moderation. The Executioner had 5 blowes at him, after the first he lookt up, & after the third he put his Leggs a Cross, & the Hangman flung away his Axe, but being chidd tooke it againe & gave him tother two strokes; and severed not his Head from his body till he cut it off

July 16,
1685

with his Knife. This Joseph told me,' Mun writes, '(who once served my Lady Gardiner), I mett him coming from Tower Hill, where he saw the Execution done.'

With advancing years, Sir Ralph finds town life more and more trying to him; 'Whether or noe you drink Asses' Milke you must expect to cough, when you come to London,' is Dr. Denton's cheerful comment upon one of his many colds. He complains that he cannot drink asses' milk at all in town, 'for the Drs (and perticularly Dr Tower) tell theire patients, that tis soe foul with sudd, smoke, & Dust, that it hath very little Vertue in it.' He returns to Claydon in the spring, and writes thence to John, who has exhorted him to keep 'within & warme.'

'Childe,—I prayse God wee came well home about Feb. 28, 5 a'clock on Friday, but my Coach was stuck in my coz: 1686. Winwood's Lane (called Stirke Lane) that I was forced to bee drawne out with a Teeme . . . My Lord Wenman I heare is very ill, soe that he hath 2 Drs. with him from Oxford, therefore he must needes bee in greate danger. To humour you I have stayed within dores ever since I came home, only I was at Church this day, but have not yet been in my Parke, Gravell Walke, nor Elme Grove, yet this day I am growne Hoarse & finde noe abatement of my cough but I am sure that staying within Dore is very unusual to me, & much against my owne inclinations and indeed very Tiresome to Your affate father, R. V.' 'I could wish you would take sugar of roses with yr. asses milke,' Dr. Denton writes. Sir Ralph was apt to do a little doctoring of his own behind the good physician's back. 'In my Pocket,' he writes March 7, to John, 'I found this Dirty Printed Paper, you know I love 1686. a mountebanke therefore at your owne leasure buy me a Role of Extract of Licoris; 'tis but a shilling & lay up thes paper that if I send for more you may know where to find it.'

A few weeks later Dr. Denton writes: 'I am sensible of our neighbour Lord Wenman's dying, and would help all if I could, but we strive against an Act of Parlt. made in Heaven, & must submitt. My Lord Wenman, my old schoolfellow and friend, is 4 or 5 yeares younger then I,

May 1,
1686.

whch gives me fresh occasion to bless God for my great share of health in my olde daies. I pray God I may make good use of it.' . . . 'My old Lord Wenman is dead,' Edmund writes, ' & now there is a great windfall at Twyford, come to Dr. Adams Rector of Lincoln Coll: in Oxford, who I ghuesse will have the discretion to make the best of it.' Two hundred years later Lord Wenman's land figured in a Bucks Election, when the men of Twyford, desiring in their turn 'to make the best of it,' applied to Lincoln College to let it to them; it furnished a topic hotly discussed by the local politicians on both sides, and the Twyford Allotments case attained to a more than local notoriety.

CHAPTER LIV.

'AN OLD AGE OF CARDS.'

1684-1687.

WHILE Rachel Lady Russell wore with so much dignity a 'sorrow's crown of sorrow' to the end of her life, her friend Lady Gardiner, who lost her excellent husband a few months later, was in danger of sinking into 'an old age of cards.' Preshaw House had been bought by Sir Hugh Stewkeley, and John Stewkeley and his family settled in London, where his chief relaxation during his last years was playing at bowls, 'when he meets at least 40 every night of parsons of good quollity.' After his death in 1684, they moved into a smaller house. Cary 'wants the wherewithal to marry her girls,' they must live 'like nuns,' she says, '& my son as Jack-a-Fryar (not virtuous enofe I fear for the company of women)'; their small town-house seems dull and narrow after the cheerful home at Preshaw, and an evening 'abroad' means play. Sir Richard Temple's little daughter Maria is christened on his birthday in the drawing-room. The baby's mother, and the godmothers, Lady Chaworth and Lady Gardiner, are immersed in cards. They leave off gambling 'for 3 or 4 rounds' while the service is actually performed, then fall to it again, oblivious of everything around them. Not content with risking whatever her own poverty could scrape together, Lady Gardiner tries to launch the whole family in fashionable speculations, and to borrow money of her own girls. Sir Ralph supports them in the difficult virtue of resisting their mother, and acts as an outside conscience to Lady Gardiner, though she protests against

his absurd scruples. She is deeply in debt, and asks him to lend her 100*l*.

‘Deare Sister,’ Sir Ralph replies, ‘at the sight of your letter it is hard to say whether I was more troubled to read your condition, or to see you insensible that you are the cause of it. I doe not wonder that play (which has ruined soe many Families and soe vast Estates) has reduced you to soe great Extremitys, as almost to see the destruction of Youres. You are in noe way qualified for a Gamester, but lie at the mercy of All that play with you. Having so small a Fortune you engage with others of great Estates, and will venture to play with them at a Game too High for you, though not for them! Pardon me Sister, I must needs tell you with a Brother’s freedom, that you are now come to the Brincke of the precipice, and nothing cann save you but a timely Retreat. . . . And to show you plainly that I doe not give you this Counsell to save my Money, I promise you the 100*l*. you desire, soe you will first send mee a full & faithful promise under your own hand, to leave off all Gameing and such continuall & extraordinary Visiting, & also to retrench your Household expenses. And if you refuse to gratify mee in this Request, you cannot expect I should comply with yours. For that would be but to furnish you for play, like an ill physician who instead of cureing feedes the Disease.’

March 10,
1685.

Cary waxes fierce under the aggravation of such excellent advice. ‘You are very sevear, and I cannot bot say unjust to Accus mee of Whot you due not know to bee truth, and of whot I can truly take my oath is fale, and yr Informars divilish lyars that tell you I have bin such a luser at play. I know the originall of all the ill is said of mee, thay goe about the earth sekking to mischef me. . . . A Church farissy and an hypocrit may easily ruing any under my sircomstances, bot as low as I am, I scorn them and all thay can due to mee, & wod not goe ovar the thrash-old to satisfy yr Informars that has bin so long hatching this mischef. . . . Whot quollyfications A gaimster should

have I am A strangare to, bot whot dus becom A gentil-woman as plays only for divartion I hope I know. For my high play I am sure when I play with thos as is of great quollyty, ther is fore of us joyn as one gang, wch is much loware to my shar than whot I usd to play at my cossen Nicholasis, and I nevar played at My Lady Deavonshirs bot thre times, and then my Lady Seamore and my Lady met, and Mrs. Vernon went equall shars with me. . . . Tis true I play with my Lady Fits, bot wee often have sherars, tho I am so Insincsible A creture yet I know did I find gameing had bin so prediditall I had long sinc left it, and why you should injoin me to leve play quite I think is hard, and as hard as I should not visit, sartainly that cannot ruing mee . . . and thank you for yr advise tho it extends to a high severty.'

'Your letter,' replies her brother, 'was sharpe as a ^{March 14,} 1686. Dagger whetted for execution. . . . when my neighbour's house is on fire, I should thank him kindly that would tell me of it. Friendly cautions are Tokens of Love, whereas Silence in Danger is a Signe of Indifference.'

'The wholl Indeavour of my life sinc my husband died,' ^{March 17,} 1686. she writes again, 'has bin to make my children's lifs comfortable, though things has not sockseeded to my mind, & am sure now sinc this unspeakable troble of yr ill opinyon of mee, I have hyd it all from them tho I have lived in sorrow night and day, & had not the Implymnt of my remove divarted mee I sopos I had bin as ill as my enymis wish mee.'

Cary cannot bear being called a gamester. 'I have ^{March 24,} 1686. known & so have you, very good women in yr Acount, as playd at cards more in a yeare than I doe in seven, wch would have taken it ill to have that title given them.' Dr. Denton has been harping on the same string. 'Your sister Gardiner is both Rotterdam & Amsterdam,' he complains, 'for she doth nothing but scold at me, & swears I am ten times worse than your worship & then I must needs be a very pure youth!' 'Sartainly,' Cary goes on, 'I am not so

void of reson at this age bot that I can refrain from duing myself and family any damag by play beyound A sum of 20*l.* or 30*l.* wch cannot ruing them.'

'Restraint from Evill,' her counsellor replies, 'is neither imprisonment nor confinement, as you call it, for to govern ourselves well is the truest Liberty. . . . if you doe not meane 20*l.* or 30*l.* a year, or 20*l.* or 30*l.* at a time, but only 20*l.* or 30*l.* in all & to leave off play for Altogether whenever that is lost, in such a case your solemn and faithful promise of it, shall end this dispute with your aff^{ate} brother and servant.'

March 31,
1686.

Cary, however, finds it inconvenient to be bound by such definite promises to so precise a person. She carries the war into the enemy's country. 'Some barbarous people has raised so great a scandall on me, I pray God forgive them . . . tis just as the lady at court [Penelope Osborne] reports, that nether I nor my daughters are ever at homb, nay, had the confidenc to tell us so to our faces, when shee has mist us when we ware at Church. I dare say no young women in towne stay more at homb, nor work harder, nor take less pleasure a broad than thay due . . . shee ever was unhappy to me. . . . I hope brother for the futur you will not credit the reports ill people rase of mee.'

Sir Ralph docketts this, 'Sister Gardiner's letter wherin she does not answer my last.' He feels that Right and Reason (with big Rs) are on his side, but Love is weary of the discussion, and he sends Cary the 100*l.* she asks for. Amicable relations being thus re-established between them, she continues her chatty chronicle and her unpleasant prescriptions. 'My lady Seymore told me the old Duck of Somerset w^{ch} was her lords brother was very Inclinaire to an apoplex above twenty years before he dyed, and did often Indanger his life, and after takeing many things of severall Physitians, was advised by a frend as had helped many of that complant, to ware oyld cloth at the bottoms of ther feet between ther socks and ther feet it might be next ther skin: and after my Lord wore this, hee never had any aparplexicall fit: so I have sent you down some in case you

ware it, tis held A drawing much from the head w^{ch} is imputed to prevent thes fits.'

Cary herself complains of shortness of breath, but is very energetic: 'I now rise at five A klok & after our six A klok prayers, I walk in our quodrangle or in the Covent Garden wher ther is a freshnes of Ayre, purer than in St. James' Park, besids I have A house as is very open backwards wch is comfortable to me. . . . ' The house is in 'James Street wch we give £60 a year for, redy furnished . . . tis neer the Church wch is the chef advantag of it.' Evelyn describes this 'new church at St James,' with its 'garlands about the walls by Mr Gibbons in wood,' and its richly adorned altar. Sir Ralph's contribution to Cary's furnishing is a rack for plates; 'My Cook-maid taks great delight in it, and so thay due all and therfore you have many thanks for it from them all and mine dobly for such a convenyent pece of houshold stof, for such neet things pleases me exstremely.' Cary writes after a visit to her brother: 'I have had a world of company with mee daly, bot not my lady Ann Grimston for Mrs Grimston was not marayed on monday morning but at night being A mode Amonxt the great ons and yesterday thay all dined at my Lord notingams. And for the honnor of yr wellcome, I am told by all as sees mee, that I look better sine I was with you, then I have don a great while so I conclud I should a groun fat, had I not had great troble to A lay the delight I took in being with you at sweet Claydon bot my joys has allways had great A lays w^{ch} is very just I should have'; after the economies of the little house in St. James's to dine well was to Lady Gardiner a pleasure second only to winning at cards. John feels much for her. 'I am sorry to see that Lady that hath kept soe many Coach horses at once, and 20 servants, now live without a paire of the first, and onely a girle of the other, for she takes no servant but frank Rogers' on a journey to Baddow.

Her son Jack (who has 'a gentile fancy' in dress and in his disinclination to work) has just won 'above £1800 at play'; his family rejoices, for he is said to be 'very fair as

Dec. 16,
1687.

a Gamester.' To the end of his life, Cary is appealing to Sir Ralph to get her out of scrapes, and in 1690 there are lawyer's letters which he has labelled as referring to 'My Lady Gardiner's Project with Mr Primrose in the Royall Oake Lottery, wherein she plunged Mr Page, her son-in-law, & herself, and he cheated her of £600.'

CHAPTER LV.

AN OXFORD UNDERGRADUATE IN THE REIGN OF JAMES II.¹

1685-1688.

'I DESIGNE you for the Universitie, if you are fit for it, for I Nov. 26,
hope in God you will take to some honourable profession of 1684.
your own accord, if not I am resolved you shalbe of a meane
one for of some Profession, High or Low, I will make you,
for I abhor you should go sauntering up & down like an idle
lazy Fellow, and soe God blesse you.'

The boy thus admonished was Edmund Verney, second son of Edmund Verney and Mary (Abell) of East Claydon; he was sixteen, and a few months later his father entered Jan. 1685. him as a 'fellow-commoner' at Trinity College, Oxford.

Sir Ralph had been brought up at Magdalen Hall; but Sir Francis Verney, of the former generation, had been at Trinity, and several of the boy's friends were already there. Philip Bertie, son of Robert Earl of Lindsay, whose father had been Mr. Cordell's pupil when Sir Ralph lived at Blois, was admitted in February 1683, aged eighteen. Denton Nicholas, Dr. Denton's grandson, went to Trinity in 1681, aged sixteen, and was now about to take his degree. Ralph Palmer, only brother of Mrs. John Verney, had been there nearly a year. John Butterfield and Simon Aris, probably relatives of the present and former Rectors of Middle Claydon, were Trinity undergraduates about this time. Josias Howe, a famous royalist divine (son of Sir Ralph's old neighbour,

¹ My thanks are due to the Rev. Herbert E. D. Blakiston, of Trinity College, for the trouble he has taken with his special knowledge to elucidate this correspondence.

Rector of Grendon Underwood for more than fifty years), was one of the lights of Trinity; he had been deprived of his fellowship by the Parliamentary Visitors in 1648, but it was restored to him at the Restoration, and he resided in the College till his death in 1701.

There was a great deal of bustle and excitement in getting the boy's outfit together. He noted with pride his 'new sylver hilted sword, his new striped Morning gown,' and his '6 new laced Bands whereof one is of Point de Lorraine.'¹

Stephen Penton, chaplain to the Earl of Aylesbury, has left us a quaint account of his parting with a son whom he took up to the University about the same time. Father, mother, and sisters accompanied the lad to Oxford, and received his tutor at an inn, where that learned person delivered a discourse to the family council, of so alarming a nature, on all that the undergraduate was and was not to do, that as soon as he left the room 'the boy clung about his mother and cry'd to go home again, and she had no more wit than to be of the same mind; she thought him too

¹ He is thus entered in the Trinity College Admission Register:

'Ego *Edmundus Verney* filius *Edmundi Verney* Armigeri de East Claydon in Com: Bucks: natus ibidem, Annorum circiter 16, Admissus sum Primi ordinis Commensalis Mense Januarii 168 $\frac{1}{5}$ sub tutamine magistri Sykes.'

And the following fees were paid:

Jan 23. 168 $\frac{1}{5}$

Received then of Mr. Edmund Verney. Ten	}	£.	s.	d.
pounds being Caution money laid into Trinity College, Oxon: I say, Received by me.				
		10	0	0

JOHN CUDWORTH BURS^R

Received also one pound ten shillings for utensils.

Item, for the New Building £15

Item, for the Common room £ 2

Jan: 23. 168 $\frac{1}{5}$

Received then of Mr. Edmund Verney the sum	}	£.	s.	d.
of one pound and eight shillings to be payed to the College servants for his admission into Trinity College Oxon: I say received by me.				
		1	8	0

THO: SYKES.

weakly to undergo so much hardship as she foresaw was to be expected. My daughters (who instead of Catechism and Lady's Calling) had been used to read nothing but speeches in romances, hearing nothing of Love and Honour in all the talk, fell into downright scolding at him, call'd him the merest scholar and if this were your Oxford breeding, they had rather he should go to Constantinople to learn manners. But I who was older and understood the language call'd them all great fools.' ¹

Edmund was spared any such scene, as his father allowed him to go to Oxford alone. The last day had been occupied with packing and making lists (such was the orderly family usage) of the clothes, bed-linen, and table-linen with which his father supplied him. On January 21, 1685, he left home, and on the 22nd his father wrote him the first of a long series of affectionate letters in which he followed every detail of his son's college career.

'For Mr. Edmund Verney at his chamber in Trinity College in Oxford, or at Mr. Thomas Sykes his Tutor's Chamber in the same College. With a Box And a Trunk.

'Child, I shalbee very joyfull to Heare of yr safe London, Jan. 22, 1685. Arrivail at Oxford, according to my kind Wishes wch. attended you all the Way for yr prosperous journey.

'I Have this Day sent you (By Thomas Moore ye Oxon Carryer) All yr things mentioned in this enclosed Note, except yr old Camelote Coate, wch. I Didd not think you would need nor worth sending; yr old Hatt I Didd not send neither, for it was soe Badd that I was ashamed of it. All yr new Things I Bought you I Put into a new Box Lockt up, and well Corded up, and the Key of this Box I Have also Here-enclosed for you: but for the Key of yr Trunk I could not find it, and its no matter, for that Lock is nothing worth: and Thom: made a shift to Lock it wth. a Key of myne: and it is well Corded besides: In yr. old Breeches wch. are in yr new Box, you will find yr five Laced-Bands (the sixt you Carried with you) and a new payre of Laced

¹ *Reminiscences of Oxford by Oxford Men.* By Lilian Quiller-Couch, p. 49 (Oxford Hist. Soc.).

Cuffes: And yr two Guinnies in yr fobb, and a new Knife and forke in yr. great Pocket. And so God Blesse you, and send you Well to Do. I am yr. Loving father Edmund Verney.'

'In yr. trunk I have putt for you

18 Sevill Oranges

6 Malaga Lemons

3 pounds of Brown sugar

1 pound of white poudered sugar made up in quarters

1 lb of Brown sugar Candy

$\frac{1}{4}$ of a lb of white sugar candy

1 lb of pickt Raisons, good for a Cough

4 Nutmeggs.'

A week passed without any reply from the boy, and his father wrote again.

Jan. 29,
1685.

'Child,—When I take any Journey I always write unto my father By every opportunity a perfect Diurnall of my Voyage, and what else occurs worthy of Remarq: I writt to you a Letter this Day seven-night when I sent you yr Trunk and Box But never Hadd any answer nor account from you since: weh. is such a peece of Omission in you, to say no worse, that I Believe neither Oxford nor Cambridge can Paralell. For why I should Bee thus Neglected By my sonne I cannot imagine: indeed I looke upon it as an ill Omen, that you should committ such a grosse solecisme at yr first Entrance into the University against yr Loving father Edmund Verney.' Letters from Oxford to London are from three to five days on the road, and one from young Edmund had miscarried.

The answer when it came showed all a freshman's nervous anxiety to do the correct thing. The outfit which had looked so handsome at home seems inadequate and rustic now, and in his self-conscious shyness young Edmund imagines that all Oxford is laughing at him.

Oxon.
Feb. 2,
1685.

'Most Honoured Father,—I want a Hatt, and a payre of Fringed Gloves very much, and I Desire you to send me them if you can possibly before Sunday next, for as I Come from Church Every body Gazeth upon me and asketh who I

am. 'This I was Told by a friend of Myne, who was asked by Two or Three who I was.'

'Child, . . . I find you Have Payd the Taylor for making yr Gowne and Cappe: But that you cannot Bee Matriculated these 3 weekes yet, untill you are Better skilled in the Orders or Statutes of yr College or University: therefore I Pray Learne them as soone as you Can. I will send you yr Bible with yr Hatt &c: And so I Conclude Beseeching Almighty God to Have you in his Keeping.'

'Most Honoured Father,—I find by your letter that you could not bye me any Fringed Gloves, untill you knew what is generally worne in the university by reason of the Death of our most excellent King Charles the Second. I cannot fully certifie as yet in this matter, But there are two or three fellow Commoners of our House of wch. Mr. Palmer is one, that have bought their Black Cloathes, and Plain Muzeline Bands, and Cloath Shooes, and are now in very strict morning: and others are Preparing for it, so that within this weeke I suppose the greater Part, if not all, of the university will be in morning.'

'Child,—Last Tusday night about 11 or 12 a Clock, yrs. of the 16th came to my Hands. I Have now sent you a new black Beaver with a Rubber and yr Handkercher in the Crowne of it, all within a pastboard Hatcase: I Have Bought you a new Sylver seale, but it is not yet Engraved with yr Coate, so I could not send it you this Bout, but it is a Doing, you suppose That within a weeke, the Greater part of the University if not all, will be in mourning: But I Ghuesse you are in a mistake, for I met with Dr. Say the Provost of Oriall, and askt Him about it, and Hee answered mee that There would Bee noe such thing as to the Generallity, Here & There some particular Persons might goe into mourning, and That would Bee all; for one swallow or two or 3 makes no Summer. Since I writt This, yr sylver Seale is Come soe I Have put it within yr Handkercher tyed up in great Hast.'

The boy writes later that mourning is worn only by families connected with the Court.

June 1685.

'Child, I Heare my Cosen Denton Nicholas is come to Towne: Home to his ffather and Mother. You say Hee Hath bespoke a new Table and Cane chayres, wch. will amount to 3[£] a peece between you, But I Do not understand why you should Bee at that unnecessary Charge, as long as you Have that wch. will serve yr turne, neither Do I like the Vanity. You do not tell me whether you are matriculated yet or noe, and I am impatient till I know Thats done. You say you want money, wch. I will supply you with very shortly, but not to Lay out in Vaine moveables, and so God Blesse you.'

'Why, what's a moveable?' we are tempted to ask with Petruchio. 'A joint stool,' Kate replies; Denton Nicholas and his cousin were intent upon a little more comfort than this, though they were far from having 'three elegant and well-furnished rooms' such as Gibbon occupied at Magdalen seventy years later.

Edmund had come to Oxford in stirring times; 'Town and Gown were alike excited about Monmouth's rebellion; the Lord Lieutenant and other gentlemen of the county were calling out the trained bands, and we hear of the Dean of Christ Church haranguing the students and using all endeavours to make them fight for the Crown. A bill of Mun's, 'for ye mending of my Sword,' suggests the exercises most in favour with undergraduates; small bodies of volunteers are enrolled at each college, and Wilding, an enthusiastic lad at St. Mary's Hall, pays threepence for Monmouth's speech.¹ It was a disappointment to many ardent spirits that the fighting was so soon over; but the men consoled themselves with bonfires in the quads, a review on Port Meadow, and uproarious drinking of toasts.

That hot summer was a sickly time in Oxford, and Mun was ill with a feverish rash very prevalent there. In July he wants 'money To Pay for my Battles for Last quarter, which Comes To £06-00-09 and to pay my Tutor's Quarterage, and some other odd Businesses.' Mun goes

¹ *Account Book of an Oxford Undergraduate*, ed. by E. J. Duff.

home, but the vacation is not apparently to last much more than a fortnight.

'Child,—I Have now sent my Man Nedd for you, Dont you make Him stay to long : I would Have ffetcht you my selfe, But that I am Hindered By an Erysipulus, wch. Troubles me so, that I cannot Ride so farr at present. . . . I make Account you shall Returne to Oxford Time enough to Bee There against ye Terme, wch. I suppose is a little after Michaelmasse for you shall never miss a Terme while you stay in Oxon if I can Helpe it, Therefore Bee sure you Bring mee word Exactly, when the Terme Begins There.'

Sept. 16,
1685.

Mun found the serenity of the domestic circle at East Claydon somewhat disturbed. His brother Ralph was desirous to marry 'so he might be free like other men,' and had asked his great-aunt, Lady Gardiner, to introduce him to some of her friends. She entered into his wishes with hearty good will, and felt no difficulty about arranging a match for him, if his father would give him an allowance. Edmund was 'under ye hands of an old Oliverian chirurgeon one Mr. Trapham . . . an able man & of great experience.' He was tortured by the caustic applied to his leg, beset with debts and difficulties of all kinds, and with the complications which his wife's madness entailed; he looked forward to clearing off his obligations when he should inherit Claydon, and thought that a boy of nineteen might wait a few years.

Sir Ralph, though fond of his namesake, and deeply interested in the question of his making a suitable marriage, considered that his son had a sufficient income, and did not offer to make any provision for young Ralph. Lady Gardiner complained bitterly that the father would 'part from nothing that can give Incouragement to trit with persons of quollyty,' but to keep her promise to the lad, she writes to his grandfather about a little heiress 'which I fancy you may make yr one terms with—shee is about 19 or 20 years of age, full out as handsome as my cossin Denton's wife of Hilsdon & as gentill, & of a much better birth, inclinable to bee fat, sings pretlyly. Her father will give her 3000 in present, & settell on her as much land

as cost him 4,000^s w^{ch} he has improved & is very improvable, & a pretty house on it. This after his death w^{ch} is 67 years of age & tis said he has 3000 more in mony w^{ch} he reserves to himselfe. Hee has a second wife an old woman as is very cross, shee is 72 years of age, something he is to leve her for life in mony I am told. Hee was a York sher gentelman, his name is Key a youngare brother. . . . I saw the young lady, w^{ch} is hansome enough to be wife to any man . . . ther is no treting with great persons for him, but I dare say this may be had. Littell things will serve her being low bred, I fancy they will lip [leap] at it, & in the end twill be good.'

Fresh difficulties seem to have arisen, and Aunt Gardiner can only beg Sir Ralph to do all in his power 'to lesson the misfortune of your young son, who I feare must not marry, nether to high nor low, young nor old, rich nor poore, I hope you did not mention mee: w^{ch} I ometed to desiare you not to due; I know the fortune is not great, and I trost in God my nevegh Ralphs estate will be kept from him many yeares by you and his father; I could fill twic this paper with arguments on the sons side, but am unwilling, sine they must reflect on him I love better than his son.'

Edmund was an autocrat with his sons, as his father had been before him. 'I heare you hate learning & your mind hankers after travelling,' he writes to Ralph when the boy wishes to have a voice in his own plans; 'I will not bee taught by my Cradle how to Breede it up 'tis Insolence & Impudence in any Child to presume so much as to offer it.' No doubt Ralph poured out his grievances to his brother, but their father was too good-natured a man for the boys to be long *en froid* with him.

John Verney with his wife and children were at Claydon, and paid the lads a visit at Oxford after their return, which Ralph Palmer acknowledges in a grateful letter to his sister. Edmund desires to spend Christmas in town with his grandfather, father, and brother. 'With All my Heart,' Edmund senior replies, 'for you shalbee most welcome to mee.

Bring along wth you (I do not meane in the Coach But) By the Carryer yr Best Waring Things, To make as good an appearance Here as you can. You shall Lye in my Chamber.'

Young Edmund is back again at Trinity College in the beginning of January 1686. 'I have payd all my debts besides my Booksellers, to whom I owed 2[£] 9^s 6^d. and out of the whole 18[£] 4^s 6^d, their is but 2[£] 1^s 0^d remaining, Therefore before I Can Pay my Bookseller, I must heare from you again.'

'Child,—I would Have answered yr ffirst Letter sooner, Feb. 6,
1686, But that yr Brother ffell sick last Tusday and continues very ill still of this Towne ffeavor, I am glad you are out of it, my uncle Dr. Denton is his Physitian, and Mr. St Amand is his Apothecary. He Remembers his Love to you; . . . I would Have you Pay yr Bookseller, and gett Him to Abate what you Can, And then all you owe in Oxford is Payd and Cleered. . . . I Am soe perplexed about yr Brother, that I can write no more.'

'My dearly beloved son Ralph departed this transitory Feb. 11,
1686. Life yesterday morning about 11 a Clock. . . . my Heart is so incurably pierced with grief for the loss of my dear child that I can no more be comforted then Rachel was who wept for her children. . . . My poor son is this day to be put up into 3 coffins, 2 of wood & 1 of lead & is to be drawn to his dormitory in my father's vault in Middle Claydon, I shall not stir out of doors till he is gone. He is to be drawn in a Herse with 6 Horses & scutcheons & one Coach more with 6 Horses accompanies him, my brother & Jack Stewkeley goe down in it as chief Mourners, & 4 men in mourning ride by on horseback along with the body all the way.' Edmund was too ill himself to go down to Claydon for the funeral.

'Child,—You and yr sister are now my only Relicts of Feb. 16,
1686. my Deare Wife yr Mother My Deare Sonne Ralph yr Brother Lived Virtuously and Dyed Penitently: soe I Do Verily Believe That he is a glorious Saint in Heaven. Now upon this sadd Occasion, I who Am yr true Loving ffather Do Take upon mee to Advise, Councell, and exhort

you, to Bee wholly Ruled and Guided By me, and to Bee perfectly obedient to mee in all Things, according to yr Bounden Deuty, and Likewise to Behave yr selfe alwayes Respectfully towards mee and towards yr Mother, and to Honor us, That thy Dayes may Bee Long in the Land, wch the Lord thy God Giveth Thee: ffor should you Doe otherwise and contrary in ye Least, unto this my Advice, Injunction, and Exhortation to you, I am affrayed That you wilbee in that evill circumstance Snatcht away By Death in your youth, as yr poore Brother was last weeke: Therefore O Thou my Sonne and Name Sake, Hearken unto my Voyce, who Doe Give Thee my Blessing: and who Am Thy most affectionate ffather and Best ffriend Edmund Verney.'

'I have Drawne affresh Bill Here enclosed upon Alderman Towneshend for 5*l.*, to Buy you a black Cloth sute. And I Have a new black Beavor Hatt for you, wch. I will send you next Thursday in a little deale Box, with a black Crape Hatband, Black mourning Gloves, and Stockings and shoe Buckles, and 3 Payres of black Buttons for wrist and neck: And I Have also sent you a new ffrench cordebeck Hatt to save yr Beavor, the Box is to Keepe yr Beavor in: no Body useth Hatcases now.'

Feb. 23,
1686.

'Most Honoured Father,—I Received Both yrs. that of the 16th and that of 18th, and by the former I understand, that it was the pleasure of Almighty God to take unto himselfe the soule of my dearest and only Brother, But I hope the Thoughts of the happyness, which he enjoyes in Heaven, will in a great measure lessen the sorrow, which I undergo by loosing so near and so dear a Relation. Now seeing it has pleased Almighty God to make me acquainted with the sorrows and Afflictions of this world, by taking from me my only Brother, I hope it will be a means to make me fear God, and Honour you and my Mother, and by so doing I hope I shall render both you and my selfe Happy. I Have made me a new Black cloth suit, and a new black morning Gown, which with new muzeline Bands and Cloth shooes will stand me in very near ten pounds. . . . '

'I present my Duty to you and my Grandfather and my

love to my Dear Sister, and so I subscribe myselfe Yr most dutyfull Sonn Edmund Verney.'

The next letter is from Ralph Palmer to Mrs. John Verney about his own private sorrows. 'Dear Sister,—I hope all yours are well and free from losses, which I am not, for my horse is dead. Ye circumstances you will hear from my Father soe that my saddle is useless. Mr. Mun Bears ye loss of his Brother, better than I do ye death of my horse.'

'Child,' Edmund writes from East Claydon, 'I made account to Bee with you before now, But my first weeke in ye Country was Taken up at Alesbury Assizes, and the 2nd Resting myselfe at Home and now in the Third, I have a cold and a sore Throat, so that I Dare not Venture soe fiarr yet, Being the weather is so very Cold wett and Boysterous. Therefore I Have sent my Man Nedd with this Letter, and five pounds for you to Pay off yr scores When the Weather comes in warmer, I will goe over to Oxford: In the meane while if you Have a great Desire to Bee Here this Easter, and that yr Tutor Mr. Sykes approve of it, not Elce, and That other Gentlemen Go see their friends generally about this Time, and that it is not Terme Time wth you, Then if you write mee word of yr Desire, I will send for you next Wednesday, and so you may Prepare yr selfe accordingly . . . 'I have sent a lb of Chocolate to my Cosen Denton Nicholas, wch came from his mother for Him, And so my service to Him and to Mr. Palmer.'

Edmund being now heir to Claydon, and to his mother's property, became more than ever an object of solicitude to his father and grandfather. The children inherited a delicate constitution from their mother; and any ailment or tendency to low spirits naturally caused their father the gravest anxiety: no expence was to be spared when Edmund's health was concerned, but he was not to incur any unnecessary outlay in dress or in the furnishing of his rooms.

'Child,—There Bee many scurvy ffeavers Here in Towne, London, So that I Do not Hold it fitt that you should Bee Here at this ffeaverish hott Time of ye yeare by noe meanes. My

March 6,
1686.

Palm
Sunday,
March 23,
1686.

May 15,
1686.

Cosen Nicholas Comming to this Towne is no Rule to mee, for Hee is Both Pox and ffeaver Prooffe wch you are not. Pray Lett me Desire you not to goe into the water till I give you Leave, for ffeare of catching Harme. Present my service to Sr. William Dormer, And as to yr Versifying Dialogue with Him, I Like it very well, if you make it yr selves not elce, But as to That wee shall Talke more of, I Hope, if I live to meete you. You Hadd Best Bee very wary of all yr words and Actions: It is sayd Here you are Growne very melancholy, when I was Told it, I made Them a smart answer on yr Behalfe: So that if you Bee serious, sober and Discreet, Thats Interpreted melancholy to yr disadvantage, But should you Bee indeed to Blame in any Thing, then yr Back ffrinds would sett you out to some Purpose, Therefore Cave mi ffilii, Dimidium verbi Sapienti Sat Est et Spero Te Talem Esse et futurum Vale.'

To the charge of being melancholy the lad replies, 'I was never inclined that way in my life any further than to be somewhat concerned at my own misfortunes, and besides you may assure yr selfe, that my tutor or the president Doctor Bathurst, if there Hadd been any such thing in the least, would have been so Just Both to you and me as to have presently informed you of it.' His friend, Sir William Dormer, of Lee Grange, had just been admitted to Trinity in the April of this year, 1686, aged sixteen, and he and Edmund were ambitious of distinguishing themselves.

June 6,
1686.

'Most Honoured Father,—I hope when my Grandfather is perfectly recovered, you will consider of chiefest Business now in hand, and that is my speaking Verses in the Theatre next Act: which as we here esteem it, is one of the noblest and most Honourable things a gentleman can doe, while he stayer in the university. Therefore seeing the time now drawes near, I desire you would Bye me a good new periwig, and send me as much as will bye a new Sute of Black Clothes, and the rest of the charges and fees will not amount to above ten pounds at most.'

June 15,
1686.

'Child,—I would have answered yours with my own

hand, but that it shakes much by Reason of sickness that seized upon me last weeke. I refused to be lett Blood because its observed that those that are lett Blood here of pestilentiall Fevers, seldom or never are Knowne to escape. My Cousin Alexander Denton the Lawyer dyed here last weeke of this Feaver, having beene lett Blood to a considerable quantity, and was gone in 3 dayes. Pray be carefull of your selfe for fevers are very frequent and Dangerous, but when they doe happen the spirits must be kept up with Cordialls, I do not mean Strong waters, And I hear Oxford is sickly And therefore you should have sent more word of it, and that Sr. William Dormer was gone home to Lee, and was sick of a Feaver, For which Reason I cannot believe he will be able to repeat his verses in the Theatre with you. As to your periwig I gave Order for one and the party forgot it, but I will be sure to buy one for you and send it downe to you in good time. And now I must Conclude in exceeding great payne with my leg, yr most affectionate father.

‘My Deare Have a Care of yr Health I pray.’

‘Child,—I receaved yours, and have taken all the care In London, the miserable Condition that I am in, as I can of what you June 21, wrote to me about. I Keep my bed, and am in continuall 1686. pain with my Legg. I am under one Mr. Hobbs a Chirurgeons hands soe that Doctors, Apothecaryes and Surgeons are my chief in converse. Your Grandfather went home last Thursday finely recovered, God be thanked. I have appointed Nedd to goe to Oxford and carry you Money, Stockings and Handkerchiefs. A Periwigg I will certainly send you, I hear ’tis allmost made. I am not in a Condition to buy anything else here or mind anything. My Cousin Nicholas had a letter from her son, he told her the Small Pox was very reef in Oxford, and particularly in your Colledge, of which I wonder that you take noe notice. If this be soe I would have you leave Oxford and goe keep your Grandfather Company at Midd: Claydon, as soon as I heare from you on this Subject, I’ll order Horses to fetch you away. I would have you preferr your wellfare and

health before the honour of speaking in the Theatre, and soe God bless you and be carefull of your self.'

The next letter was written in bed with evident pain and difficulty, Edmund having no one but 'the Cooke-maid Dorothy' who had 'just now come' from East Claydon to nurse him.

June 24,
1686.

'Child,—I pray when you speak in the Theatre doe not speak like a mouse in a chees for that will be a great shame instead of an honour, but speak out your words boldly and distinctly and with a grave confidence, and be sure to articulate your words out of yr mouth soe that every body may heare them playnly.'

July 6,
1686.

'Child,—I heard that the players are gon down to Oxford, but I am unwilling that you should go to see them act, for fear on your coming out of the hot play house into the cold ayer, you should catch harm, for as I did once coming out of the Theatre at a publick Act when it was very full and stiaminghot, and walkin a Broad in the cold, and gave me sutch a cold that it had Lik to a cost me my Life. Your best way in Sutch a cold is to go hom to your one Chamber directly from the play house, and drink a glass of Sack, therefour Be sure you send your Servant At your hand for a bottle of the Best Canary and Keep it in your chamber for that purpose. Be sure you drink no Kooleing tankord nor no Cooling drinks what so ever . . . harkon Thou unto the voyce & Advise of mee Thy ffather, Loving Thee Better then him selfe.'

It is hard to imagine undergraduate Oxford without cricket or boating, but this allusion to the players is one of the few references to amusements that we have in the correspondence. In Wilding's account-book are the entries 'Michaelmas Term, spent in coursing 1s. 8d., and in the Winter Term At ye Musick night 2s. 6d.'; it was also open to the curious in 1686, to pay 2d. 'For seing ye Rhinoceros,' as Wilding did, and to view 'the rarities in the Physick School, the skin of a jackall, a rarely coloured jacatoo or prodigious large parrot and 2 humming birds, not much bigger than our humble bee.'

There was 'swimming in Merton Pool & Scholars' Pool, some tumbling in the hay, leaping, wrestling, playing at quoits and fishing.' Laud had put an end to the popular exercise at Oxford of learning 'to ride the great horse,' as he found in the riding school 'where one scholar learns, 20 or 40 look on & there lose their time,' so that the place was fuller of scholars than either schools or library; nor would he 'suffer scholars to fall into the old humour of going up & down in boots & spurs with the ready excuse that they were going to the riding house.' But neither Archbishop nor Puritan reformer could keep English lads and their horses long apart, and many a 'fine padd' was kept 'for health's sake' at one of the 370 Oxford ale-houses; and the more zealous tutors complained of the time spent by the scholar, who must needs go once every day to see that his horse eats his oats, and 'the horse growing resty if he be not used often, he must have leave to ride to Abingdon once every week, to look out of the tavern window & see the maids sell turnips.' The same authorities viewed with displeasure the bowling-green and the racket court, as they were public places resorted to by 'promiscuous company,' and such violent games tended, it was said, 'to fire the blood by a fever.'

The Verneys, who were not much of theatre-goers, had always taken dancing seriously, as part of the training of a gentleman. Sir Roger once entreated Sir Ralph's good counsel for his son Jack, lest in following this art he should 'make choice of some pedantic master, which will doe him more hurt than good, most of the dancing-masters teach them such affected gates and carriage as is conceited and ridiculous. Advise him to the Best, though he payes 3 times as much for it.' 'The best' were indeed so well-paid at Oxford that 'an honest tutor sold his hours cheaper than the fencer or dancing-master,' and it was a common complaint of sober people that 'Taylors, Dancing-Masters & such trifling fellows arrive to that Riches & pride as to ride in their Coaches, keep their Summer Houses & to be served in Plate, etc. etc. an insolence insupportable in other well-governed Nations.'

There were dancing and vaulting schools at Oxford, but fencing was probably the form of exercise viewed with least disfavour by the learned, and Mun pursued it with ardour. His hopes of distinction as a reciter were doomed to disappointment.

July 23,
1686.

'Most Honoured Father,—Our Act was put off this year by reason of the death of the Bishop [Fell], which hindered us of speaking verses in the Theatre, But the Priveleages and charges are the same now as if we had spoke our verses, Though I think we have quite lost the Honour of it.

'I have bought me a new sute of mourning and by reason of the excessive heat of the summer I was forced to Buy a new crape gown, which will stand me in £02 10^s 00^d, but I have not yet payed for my gown. I want new shirts very much.'

London,
Sept. 14,
1686.

'Child,—I Received a Letter lately from Mr. Sykes yr Tutor, unto whom you are very much obliged. Take my word for it, Albeit Hee makes a complaint of you, for not frequenting a certain afternoone Lecture as you were wont to Doe, yet otherwise Hee Speakes very Hansomly of you, wch Rejoyces my Heart, ffor I Take Him to Bee a plaine Dealer, and an Honest Gentleman, and I Hope you will Deserve those many good commendations Hee Hath Given me of you.

'It seems you Tell Him, That you Have particular Reasons, That you cannot Discover, why you come not to those Lectures. This may possibly Bee, as to Him and others, But as to mee who am yr ffather, There can Bee None, Therefore Pray Lett me Know By the next Post, those particular Reasons, And if I Like Them, I will Doe what I can with civility to Gett you excused: For Looke you Child, any one may Pretend particular Reasons, which one cannot discover, for not Doing what one ought to Do, or for doing what one ought not to Doe: But That Shamme will not Passe among Wise Men: ffor such Pretences to Avoyd ones Deuty, are allwayes (wth Justice) Interpreted in ill sence, and I should Bee very sorry any such Reflections should ffall upon you: you are under Government, as all subjects are in

severall Kinds, and therefore are Bound By Laws and Rules and Precepts Divine to obey : Besides it is a wrong to the Society not to Come to Lectures, ffor if all others should fforbeare Comming to them as you Doe, the Lectures must ffall, wch are a support to a College, and so By Degrees Arts and Sciences, and Learned Societies must Dwindle away and Dissolve to nothing : But I Hope none of my Posterity will ever Bee the primum mobile of such a mischief to Learning : And so I shall close up my Discourse about this Businesse for this time and Longing for yr Answer about it.'

Meanwhile young Edmund had got into a more serious scrape at Oxford, and was in danger of being sent down ; but the following letter from his tutor was accidentally delayed for more than three months, and before it reached his father at East Claydon the undergraduates were all scattered by an alarming outbreak of small-pox, and the letter had ' through length of time grown obsolete.'

' Sir,—Since my last there are arisen new troubles, not about the Lecture mentioned in my former Letter, for I suppose that is at an end according to your Letter to me, But about other matters. It so happened that Mr. Verney Lay out of the College on Wednesday night Last with another or two of our College, and that with some other Provocations hath occasioned Mr. Vicepresident to Cross his name with the others. I suppose he will give you an Account where he was, he is unwilling to do it here, and that makes the business So much the worse. I suppose he will scarce ask for his name againe, and I presume the Vicepresident will not give it him of his owne accord, and so what will be the issue of it I Know not. He speaks of removing of himself to some other College, but I much question whether that will be for his advantage or not. If he is unwilling to stay here perhaps Sir its better to remove him from the university but I leave it to you Sir to judg what is best to be done ; I canot help this and I hope he will not deny but that I have behaved myself to him in all things as a tutor ought to do, and been civil to him as far as I could, but as to this business I can only be sorry for this, but canot remedy it. It is directly

Oct. 1,
1686.

against both the discipline of our College and ye University in General to Ly out a nights, And I finde I canot prevail with the Vicepresident to take off the Cross unless your Sonn will acknowledg his fault and promise not to be faulty any more in that Kinde.

'I humbly beg pardon for this trouble and give you my most hearty thankes for all your kindness to Hon^{ed} Sir, your most humble and obliged Servant Tho : Sykes.'

Nov. 8,
1686.

Mun goes down with the rest of the undergraduates. 'Deare Brother,' Edmund writes to John, 'My sonne & I, & Grosvenor, & Mr Butterfield and Dover, Have all Read yr Booke of the Seige of Buda,¹ soe I Have sent it Back to you, wth my Thankes, and a Cheese, w^{ch} I hope will prove Good, if a Mousc's judgement may Bee Credited, you will find it soe. I Heare the small Pox Rages mightily in Trinity College in Oxon, as the Great one doth in London, so that Eight went out lately sick of them from that College, wch makes me afrayed to send my sonne Thither till albee well again. Sir William Dormer is kept still at Lee upon the same account.' Two more fellow commoners of Trinity, 'Mr. Chambers and one Mr. Knopher,' have fallen sick. The small-pox had done young Mun at any rate a good turn; his indiscretions were forgotten, while the authorities were gathering together their scattered and diminished flocks, and he never got into trouble again.

Dec. 16.
1686.

'Sir,' writes Dr. Sykes to Edmund Verney, 'The small pox were in Oxford before your Sonn Left this place, and since that time we have had Several Sick of that disease, but at present we are all well in our College, but there are some still sick of other Colleges: Since the beginning of May last we have had (if I reckon right) sixteen or seventeen that have had this distemper in our College, and every one of them did well, and very few have miscarryd in the whole University, but however there is a danger in the

¹ Another favourite book of Edmund's, *The Voyage of Italy*, 1670, written by a fellow traveller of his in 1652, 'Mr. Richard Lassels, a Preist,' who 'went then by ye name of Richard Bowles,' has been restored to Claydon by the kindness of the Rev. W. G. Scott Hall, January 1904.

Disease, and its very chargable being sick here, and that was the reason why I have not desired your Sonn's Company sooner. I hope the disease is now going off . . . and the sooner your Sonn Returnes to me the more welcome he will be.'

Discipline for some years was very lax, as Aunt Isham complained when her son was at Merton twenty years earlier. 'I heare as Tome will drinke more then his share . . . Oct. 16, 1666. he hath an ingenus tuter & if I give him an hinte of itt he will brake him of itt, but that Colige he was put in for beinge one of the sivelest itt is far from that, for all hours of the nite one maye goe out as Tome did tell me, for the felowes be out so much a nites as the gates be most an end open.' The extravagant joy felt at the Restoration had nowhere been more loudly expressed than in loyal Oxford. 'They were not only like them that dream,' writes an Oxford man, 'but like them who are out of their wits, mad, stark, staring mad. To study was fanaticism, to be moderate was downright rebellion, and thus it continued for a twelvemonth ; and thus it would have continued if it had not pleased God to raise up some Vice-Chancellours who stemmed the torrent, and in defiance of the loyal zeal of the learned, the drunken zeal of dunces, and the great amazement of young gentlemen who really knew not what they would have, but yet made the greatest noise, reduced the University to that temperament that a man might study and not be thought a dullard, might be sober and yet a conformist, a scholar and yet a Church of Englandman.'

Edmund Verney had gone up while the zeal which had carried these reforms was not yet spent. The strictness of the college discipline in his time is in striking contrast to the experience of an undergraduate in the next century when authority was nodding again. Edmund Verney could not sleep out one night without incurring the risk of being sent down. Edward Gibbon relates his 'notorious absences.' 'A tour in Buckinghamshire, an excursion to Bath, 4 excursions to London, were costly and dangerous follies, and my childish years might have justified a more than ordinary restraint. Yet I eloped from Oxford, I

returned, I again eloped in a few days, as if I had been an independent stranger in a hired lodging, never once hearing the voice of admonition, or once feeling the hand of controul.' ¹

In Edmund's carefully kept accounts very little is spent for wine, the heaviest charge is for '3 Quart Bottles of Sack, 2 of White Wine & 4 of Claret,' amounting to 12s.; there are frequently small entries of 'Oranges, Apples, Sugar Plums & Spice, for Tuk 1s., for Oysters 1s. 6d., for De Vries' Logic 2s., for wood as billet & faggots 14s. 6d.' In the quarter ending Lady Day 1688, while he pays only 3l. 4s. 6d. to his tutor and 9s. 3d. to his bookseller, 'a long wigg' costs him 2l. 5s.

He is settled again at Trinity College, and his father resumes the correspondence; he has desired Alderman Townshend to pay Mun six guineas in gold and ten pounds in silver, and in the breeches, packed with his new clothes, 'within one of the little Pockets buttoned' he is to find '3 Guinnys done up in Paper.' 'I durst send you no Lemons nor oranges for feare of stayning your Clothes. I hope you tooke care to have your Bedd well ayred & warmed.'

March 1,
1687.

'Child, I am very Gladd to see that you Got safe and well to Oxford and That you have yr Name againe given you By Mr. President and That he was so Civill to you, and That you stand Rectus in Curia quo ad Collegium Tuum again: Pray Have a Care of a Relapse, Least it prove a worse Disgrace to you (to say no more) then it was at first; And never Keepe such Damed Company for the Time to Come, whose evil communications (tho' witty) corrupt good manners, and strike at ffundamental obedience as Honesty, and Religion, and in Lieu of them Plant in Mens Hearts and minds Hyppocrisie, and Knavery, and Impiety. And so make People grow only fiitt for Hell and the Devill: And Pray no more journeys nor Lying out of yr College without yr Tutor's Leave or myne: my sonne mark well my words who am thy ffather, And Lett Them Take Deepe

¹ *Autobiographies of Ed. Gibbon.* Murray, 1896, p. 227.

Roote in Thee, and Thou shalt find Benefit By observing Them.'

'Child . . . I saw Thom : Smith Here last night as plaine as a Pike staff in Cloaths, but They Looked very Gentile upon Him, Being cleane & Neate. Why Did you not write me word that your Chumme was made Master of Arts ?'

March 10,
1688.

To Dr. Thomas Sykes he writes : ' This day about noone yr Messenger Brought me the ill newse of my Sonnes unlucky accident last Munday. I am very sorry for it : But am extremely joyfull to understand by you that the worst is past with this and that He is in so fayre a way of amendment soe I Hope There is noe Danger in a dislocation of an Elbow, where such excellent Chirurgions and Bone setters are at Hand, and Physitians if occasion Be : I Ghuesse this was done a wrestling and the Place was very ill chosen for such an exercise : But since it is Done, all the Helpe for Him and care of Him must Be Hadd as can possibly Bee. And so I hope it wilbee a warning to Him to Be more carefull of Himselfe Hereafter. I am infinitely obliged to you for yr great care of Him and the Advice you gave me of his ill accident and his present condition, and Returne you Millies Millena Millia of Thankses for it : if I finde myselfe any wayes able, & that the weather Be ffayre, I wilbe wth Him tomorrow, However I will send to Him in case I cannot come, and in the meane while I now send Him my Blessing and Heartily pray for his Speedy Recovery and Happinesse, wch I desire you to Tell Him from me.'

April 6,
1687.

'Child,—Nedd Brought me last ffryday yrs of the 22nd And last Night late I Received yrs of the same date wch came by the Post : But send to me no more that way for it is the worst way, and almost as Deare as if you Hyled a foote messenger on purpose. There is a Bisseter Carryer Called my Lord Ellis who comes and goes 4 times a weeke betweene Oxford and Bisseter, so when you write to me you may direct yr Letters to me To Be Left with Mr. John Burghnesse a mercer at Bisseter, who will give it to one Mr. Warry who Keepest Winslow Market, and so I may get a Letter from you any Thursday. I Believe it is Good to exercise yr arme

April 29
1687

moderately, that the sinues may Be stretcht by Degrees unto their pristine Length, But you must Be vastly Carefull in the Doing it, Least yr Elbo slippe out again, and then it wilbe exceeding Difficult ever to make it stay in the right Place: are you sure it is right sett, for my Man Tells me that you can Hardly Bring it to yr mouth so that if it should Be wrong set, the Chirurgion wilbe apt to Lay the ffault upon the shrinking of the sinues, and throw it off of Himselfe, for tho' without all Doubt Mr. Poniter is an excellent Chirurgion and I Believe a very carefull Honest man, yet I know not whether He Be so good a Bone Setter, tho' He may Bee Both.'

In May Edmund sends 'his Bay Pacer because he is a very easy goer,' with two servants on horseback to fetch his son home, being still anxious about his arm. He is to bring his new gloves and to ride carefully. The Oxford surgeon charges three guineas for his attendance; he came to Mun every day for about a fortnight, 'and applyed several Poulcesses and Oyntments to the elbow.'

May 14,
1687.

Mr. Sykes writes to Edmund: 'Sr,—I send this with your Sonn to give you thanks for all Kindnesses which I have Received of you and acquaint you with his condition. His arme is free from paine, but he hath not yet the right use of it, And upon that Account as soon as I was fearfull that all was not right, I would have had him gone home to you in order to his consulting some very skilfull Chirurgion, and particularly advised him to one Mr. Freeman who lives near Daventry in Northamptonshire, and is every market Day there at the Wheatsheaf. This man here is look'd upon by Physitians and others as the most skilfull Bone setter in all England, And therefore I had a desire that your Sonn should have his opinion; But this I thought could not be conveniently done unless he first came to you, that he might have had the convenience of your horses, and ye attendance of one of your servants, Besides the Chirurgion here all along hath been confident in asserting that the bones are in their right place, and stands to it still, which made him less careful to consult

another. His lameness or one thing other hath so troubled him since his last Returne that he hath not minded his business so well as otherwise he might have done, And when he is well he does not love to rise in a morning, and therefore looses part of the College exercise, but I hope these things will be mended if he Returne againe perfectly well.'

Edmund took Mr. Sykes' advice, and writes to John of their visit to Daventry :

'The famous Bone setter Mr. ffreeman Lookt upon the arm and ffelt it, and sayd it is right sett, and nothing out, but That the sinues are shrunk weh makes Him That Hee cannot Hold his Arme streight: But Mr. ffreeman sayes his Arme will Do well: and Be as streight as ever, if Hee Doth use it and exercise it with care: and ffollow his directions and prescriptions. I Lay at the Wheate Sheafe in Daventry, and met wth Dr. Skinner There, who is very well: I saw also my old ffriend Nan Birt now Arnold, and her Husband: so on the next morning I Ridd with my Sonne to Northampton to show Him that pretty Towne; where wee Dined at the George Inne: And I sent for one Mr. Dover the Town Clark and my man Dover's Brother, and one Mr. Stone a Trooper in Captain Lumley's Troope whom I Knew, to Dine with mee, and wee saw all and were very civilly merry and so wee Came Home, I Thank God very safe and well. The Trooper Told me that t'other Day two Troopers ffell out about a Horse shoe, and went out and ffought, and one shot the other in the Head, and Killed Him dead upon the Spott and He that Killed Him was shot in the shoulder Himselfe, But Hee Gott his wound Dressed and filedd: There be 3 Troopes quartered in Northampton' After Mun's return to college his father writes :

'Child,—I Received yrs of ye 24th. And you can Hardly imagine How joyfull I Am, that you are well, I need not Tell you that I wish you a long continuance of Health, when I Do Assure you that I Reckon it my Chiefest ffelicity in this world: Therefore I Leave it to you to Come to mee when the Doctor and yr selfe Doe Think fitt, only Bee carefull

May 22.
1687.

London,
May 27,
1687.

of yr selfe by the way, and Lett me Know the Day before-hand. I Have writt very Earnestly for new shirts for you, and I Do Hope to Receive some Here tomorrow by Franc Hall my Carryer, if my ffolke send none I shalbee very angry. I Do Keepe my Charrett in Towne, But my Charrettier Nedd Smith is as inexpert a Driver as Phaeton was, neverthesse I Doe venture my selfe now and then with Him.'

In the summer of '87 Edmund has a house-full of guests at East Claydon; Mun is at home and helping to entertain the good company. 'Sir Richard Temple drank here on his way to the Aylesbury sessions and his two sonnes eate a neates Tounge with me yesterday, and I Gave Them a Bottle of wine as They came from Eaton Schoole to go Home to Stow.' Lady Gardiner and her son Jack are expected; the Hillesden family come over to dinner. Edmund has ordered a new chariot from Stone, a London coach-builder. 'I find you are very Satyricall upon Sr fleetwood Dormers Chariot,' he writes to John, 'I am affrayd you will Dislike myne and Think it ridiculous, for it is not very modish but I Think it is convenient, pray Tell me yr opinion before it Be made up.'

Aug. 17,
1687.

Mun asks his uncle John to buy him 'a Cravat Ribbon of any modest colour, and as much as will make a hatband of the same, all made up according to the mode' in London. The news at Claydon is that 'old Mrs. Roades of Ffynmore is dead.' There is a constant interchange of hospitality between the two family houses; a note of Mun's to his grandfather has survived. 'Sir My ffather is under the Razor: Therefore He has commanded me to present his humble duty to you, and to Let you Know that he will waite on you at dinner and so will also, Your most Dutyfull Grandson and humble Servant.'

He is back at Oxford for the winter term, and his father writes:

Dec. 11,
1687.

'Child,—I Have not Heard from you since I saw you. And I intend for London (God Willing) some Time this weeke with yr Grandfather, I shalbe very Gladd to Heare

by my man tomorrow, That you are well, and particularly yr fface and Arme, and what Physick you Have Taken Since, and How it agreed with you, Bee sure as Nothing Bee Done to Strike in that Humeur.'

'Child, I shall expect you on Satterday next and Bidd you very welcome, in the meane while I wish you a prosperous journey. I was sorry for the sadd accident that Happened betweene the two Brothers Treavers [John Trevor, son of Viscount Dungannon and Anne Lewis of Anglesey, was accidentally shot by his brother Marcus], but Evill Accidents Happen Here alas, for Count la Coste a ffrench man, and Nephew to my Lord ffersham was Killed t'other day in St. James Square By one Mr. Grymes. I Have a new shirt Here Ready for you, and shall Buy Muzeline Cravats and Ruffles, against you come to me.'

Jan. 3,
1688.

Dec. 31,
1687.

'Child,—I am gladd to heare that the redness of your fface is all most vanished so as hardly to be perceived, and I hope you finde yourselfe in health other ways, and if you do, don't you give your Body to physick, for the sound need no physision and so that he that lives physically lives miserable. I would have you exercise your Body with Mr. Sionge and your minde with Mr. Sikse, and Keep good Hours and a seperat holesum diet and have a care of over heating your selfe and catching cold, then I hope you will enjoy Long health, for that is the way and so I pray God Bless you and do you Be sure to Remember thy Creator in the dayse of thy youth. . . . My Cosen Ann Hobart's Maid Nan Rogers is to Be married to one Berger a french Barber, an unfortunate Protestant, to avoyd Sulla in his own country comes Heare into ours, and is Like to ffall very suddenly into Charibdis thro' so ffoolish a choise.' 'You might Have Written me newse of Magdelin College without Reflexions, and then there can come no Harme of it, for those are not state affaires.'

Feb. 1688.

'Let no Body see my Letters to you.'

'Child,—I am often askt How you do by some Persons that I Ghuesse Do not aske out of true Kindnesse, but wishing at the same time that you were otherwise, as old

London,
Feb. 19,
1688.

Th: Stephens used to aske often How his mother Didd, Hoping for her Death, and when He was Answered that his mother was well, He went away sorrowfull and sayd that They Lived Long at East-Claydon. You write with such pittifull Pale Ink that by the time your Letter Comes Hether it is scearce Legible.' Edmund has got down to the parlour, wearing a 'slitt shoe'; Mun junior has paid 10s. entrance money for his fencing-lessons.

London,
March 17,
1688.

'Child,—I Like well what I perceive by yrs of the 15th That you Learne to exercise the Pike and Musquet as well as ffence of Mons^r New-house, But to send you any of my Carabines from Home, I shall not, for I Am very Nice in my owne Armes, especially when I know you Have Been negligent or Heedlesse in Losing a sword Already. I Hadd rather Go to the Mineries and Buy a little Gunne with a match Lock, w^{ch} I Believe I can Have for 10 or 12 shillings, for you, I was once a Buying one of that Price for my selfe of Mr. Norman, deceased, but wee disagreed about 2 or 3 shilling so I Had it not: But I Ghuesse you may for a shilling or 18 pence Have a little Gunne & a flask Sent you from any Gunsmith in Oxford Good enough for to serve yr Turne for such a purpose.' Edmund had just paid 4*l.* 15*s.* for a gun for his own use.

'Tho: Gardiner was Here this morning, He Hath Been the Circuit as ffar as Bedford and Huntington & was Retained in Several causes, w^{ch} was very much to his Credit, being the first Circuit that Ever Hee went: you say you care not How plaine yr Cloathes Bee provided yr Linnen and Trimming Bee good, I see you affect finery but you are under a grand mistake for the best Gentlemen and noblemen that are Belonging to the Army, Go exceeding plaine in Both cloathes and Trimming, for to go otherwise Habited is Like Bestowing nine pence in sauce to make a Dish of Meate worth Three pence: & so God in Heaven Blesse you.'

London,
March 24,
1688.

'Child, I shall send you two pounds of the best Chocolate upon next Munday by the Carryer, better than any that can be had in Oxford or Cambridge. But it is Like casting Pearle

afore Swine, that understand not the Value of it, as I Do that saw it made.

'Yr Grandfather was Taken ill last Tusday, But I Thank God is finely Well Recovered, so There is a good subject for yr Pen to write a congratulous Letter thereupon.

'Why Didd you not Tell me that yr Bishop of Oxford¹ was Dead, such Remarquable occurrences you should Impart that Happen Neare you, or elce writing will signify nothing more then I Am well as I Hope you are, & my scribling is Done.'

Mun writes, as his father suggests, a careful letter on large paper and with an ample margin, in which after many well-turned phrases of inquiry he sends the University news. 'Most Honoured Grandfather,—Doctor Lamphier, Head of Heart Hall died last Friday ["the greatest eater that ever I knew," writes Dr. Prideaux], and one Mr. Thornton a fellow of Waddam Colledge has a great friend the Chancellor for the headship of the said hall. This Doctor Lamphier was likewise History Professor to the university, and now there are three Persons stand for that Place, one Doctor Alldworth lately a fellow of Magdalen Colledge, and Mr. Finch, Warden of all souls Colledge and one Mr. Dodwell a forreiner but with all a very learned man, and of an extraordinary Good Character. The Election will be made to-morrow by convocation, and it is thought Mr. Dodwell will carry it.

'I Present my humble duty to you, and my Father, and my love to my Sister; and this is All at Present ffrom me, Who am your most Dutyfull Grandson Edmund Verney.'

'Child,—I Received y^{rs} of the 3^d And Am Gladd you Like the Chocolate & Bicinelli I sent you. I Am sure They were as good as could Bee in their Kind, the King God Blesse Him cannot ate Better. Yr Grandfather shewed mee the Letter you wrote to Him t'other Day to congratulate

¹ Samuel Parker, the intruded President of Magdalen, who, having been 'puritanically educated,' became an extreme champion of the divine right of Kings and was famous for his 'flexibility of conscience' under James II.

his Recovery, w^{ch} I Read and Like very well, . . . my Lady Gardiner Having finisht her Affayres with Mr. Thomas Gardiner, He went yesterday to Cambridge to Reside There at his ffellowship in Peter-House till next Terme, where He is to exercise the office of a Deane, w^{ch} is properly censor morum. You write to me to Buy you a new Sute of Cloathes against Easter w^{ch} I Do not Think fitt to Bee Bought so soone, because I intend only to Buy you a Campagne Sute this Summer, w^{ch} I would Have you Have ffresh to Appeare with me at the Camp, w^{ch} I Have some Thoughts of shewing you if I Live & am well and able.'

London,
April 21,
1688.

'Child,—I would Have you Go as soone as may Bee unto One Mr. Tho: Wrenches at Paradise Garden in Oxon, And see and examine what Right Dutch Artichoakes, True in the Kinds without Mixture, and 6s. 8d. pr Cent Hee Hath, And send mee a full account Thereof by the next Post, because your Grandfather and I Both would Have some from Thence. . . . Send me word whether Colly flower Plants may Be Hadd at Oxford and at what Rates by the Hundred.'

May 5,
1688.

Mun writes that artichokes cost 10s. per hundred and that 'Collyflowers may be had of several nurserymen in Oxford from 2s. to 5s. and 6s. a hundred,' but his father and Sir Ralph 'will Have no more to say to Them at those Rates, But Then,' they ask, 'why Didd Mr. Th: Wrenches sett out in the Gazette by way of advertisement that Hee would sell the right Dutch Artichoakes without mixture at a Noble, w^{ch} is 6 shill: 8 pence the Hundred?'

May 8,
1688.

'Most Honoured Father,—I understand that mine of the 29th. last Post did not thoroughly satisfy you concerning my debts of the last quarter due at our Lady Day last, and particularly concerning that which I owe to the Colledge which is 09[£] 10^s 07^d because I did not particularize for what, and I Perceive you Think that this colledge debt is only for bare meate and drink together with my chamber rent which is not so, for we gentlemen do maintain all the colledge servants and serviters, and something we pay quarterly for university dues, and there are severall other expences which

at present I cannot think on that are Reckoned in for Battles: But as for my Bedmaker, Landresse, and Barber, which you supposed to be appendants to the College they are not payd by the Burser but by me, so they are not Put down in the Burser's Booke amongst my Battles: neither Did I put them down in the account of my debts, because I have them already. I Perceive you think my expences very great, but I am sure if you rightly understood the necessity of them you could not chuse but think them very reasonable and me very frugall . . . I did not long since design to go through a course of Chymistry, the expences of which would amount to 3 pounds and upwards, but thinking it a charge not absolutely necessary I have desisted in my designs, and Let slipp a very Good opportunity. . . .'

Natural science had been dabbled in by the Oxford dons for many years, but it was a new subject with the undergraduates, and the distinction between chemistry and alchemy was not clear to the mind of the country squire.

'I am gladd,' Edmund writes, 'you Didd not Goe ^{May 19,} thorough with a Course of Chymistry, That sort of Learning ^{1688.} I Do not approve of for you, it is only usefull unto Physitians and it impoverisheth often those that study it, and Brings constantly a Trayne of Beggars Along with it. . . .'

'Most Honoured Father,—I writt to you before last ^{May 22,} Easter for new Cloathes, for the truth of it is, mine do ^{1688.} begin to be so bad, that I am almost ashamed to weare them. . . .'

'Child,—I Have Bought Cloth for my selfe and for you ^{May 26,} to make new Cloathes, wch is now in the Taylours Hands to ^{1688.} Be made up, And I Gave Him great Charge to make yr Cloathes Gentill and Modish as can Bee. Yr Cloth is something Lighter than myne. My Cosen Nicholas Tells me that Mr. Newhouse is Turned Trooper, and that He did it for a subsistence; I am very sorry that a man of his Parts and ingenuity could not maintaine Himselfe without Turning Souldier, for tho' the Profession is Honorable, yet There is alwayes abundance of Badd Company attends it, wch makes mee not so ffond of yr continuing to Bee his

Schollar as I was Before. My father's coachman Nedd, is so troubled with flatus Hyppocondriacus that he cannot drive my father, and the dogs in our Country are much subject to Madnesse this yeare: therefore Have a care of Them, and Don't Play with Them.'

May 29,
1688.

Mun wishes he had been consulted before his suit had been ordered; he believes that 'stuff will be more modish than cloth this summer, and that most people will weare it. But however seeing you have Bought cloth already I am very well contented with a cloth sute; I hope you will consider to buy me some good shirts or elce some sort of wastcoat sutable for Summer ffor it is not fashionable for any Gentleman to go Buttened up either summer or winter but especially summer. I shall likewise want new stockings and lased ruffles to weare with my new clothes. My Month ended yesterday with Mr. Newhouse, and I do designe to pay him the 15s. next time I see him: it is true that he rides in a troope, but he tells his schollars that he only rides as a reformado in hopes of getting a commission for a Cornets place, and that the Coronel has promised to free him whensoever he pleases.'

June 12,
1688.

Edmund's corpulence and his sufferings increase, he has gained 20 lb. in weight in a few months; he is going to law with his man, Dick Lonsdale, at the Assizes, and is retaining Sir John Holt. Mun begs to be allowed to come and nurse him; he could be with him 'at one day's warning by the flying coach,' but his father, though alone in town, will not hear of his coming up to 'such a sickly place.' Mr. Duncombe and Mr. Butterfield have been to see Mun in Oxford.

June 30,
1688.

'Child,—I perceive you Think yr new Cloathes too warme for the Summer, But I Do not, if it Bee a ffault, I am sure it is a good one: Then you wonder why I made it a halfe mourning sute, and that you Hoped that none of our Relations are Dead: to which I answer wee Have lately Lost one of our neare Relations, my Cosen Pegg Danby, a Person of great quality, who is Dead and Buryed Here in St. Martins: And I Have made my selfe a halfe mourning Sute,

And Declare I mourne for Her. My cosen Winwood is also Deade. But However halfe mourning Sutes are as much worne, and are as modish as any Thing out of mourning: I see no Body weare Rich Sutes But Souldiers, and mercantile ffellows, that covet to appeare very Brave and Gentlemen Like, when They are not soe: as for another payre of Breeches if you desire Them I shall Buy you a payre tho' it Bee Needelesse: You say you Have Been wonderfull ffrugall, if I ffind it so, I shall commend you extremely: My unhealthy condition makes me spend more then I would Do in spight of my self. . . . Next Munday I am to Bee of a Jury at the King's Bench, in a Tryall betweene the Lord Chancellour and one Mrs. Herbert of our Country: And I will Be There if I am well: And so God Blesse you, and send us a happy meeting.'

He encloses three patterns of striped cloth, but Mun desires that 'for variety's sake his next pair of breeches be made of silke.' 'Mr. Hunt, one of the fellowes of our colledge, and a little suspected in his religion, is lately preferred to the chaplain to the tower.' Edmund orders Mun a pair 'of Damask Silke Breeches, as Gentile as any Body weares Them,' and has 'them up in a little Deale Box with a payre of modish shoes Buckles.'

Mun's undergraduate friend Sir William Dormer, who was to have shared with him the honour 'of speaking verses in the Theatre,' 'is in Rebellion against his Tutor & Grand-mother, And is resolved to bee Master over Himselfe, he hath taken a Ramble some say to see the Camp'; but Mun is much more dutiful and diligent. We leave him in the careless enjoyment of his Oxford life, unconscious of the great changes which were to befall his own home and the kingdom before this fateful year 1688 had run its course.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE REVOLUTION AND ITS PROLOGUE.

1686-1689.

IN the little world represented by the Verney letters there was so great a dread of civil war and so firm a determination to believe the best and to make the best of the King, that it seemed impossible for James II. to alienate the loyal hearts that surrounded him. Mr. Butterfield's journal gives a fair and temperate retrospect of the changes wrought in the opinions of the country clergy during the three years of James's reign.

In the Bucks elections following King Charles's death, the Rector of Claydon bestirred himself, in strong opposition to Sir Ralph's wishes, for the return of Judge Jeffreys' candidates. 'I entered upon the Ministerial function very young,' he says of himself,¹ 'in the latter end of the loose Reign of K. Ch: 2nd, when Reformation was at an Ebb & Toryism & Bigotry, or the Arbitrary Power of the Prince, & the Authority of Mother Ch: ran high. Passiev Obed: & Non Resistance, & no Salvation out of the Episcopal Comunion, were the common Topicks of the Court, & Popular Sermons; the Test of Loyalty, & good affection to the Church of England & the high Road to Perferment. I being then, as now, settled in a low Station & not affecting greater, had little occasion or concern to enquire nicely into those controversial matters which exercised these learned & dignified men; being then as now, hasty in my Judgmts, a thorough conformist. So taking things according to the ancient fame & approbation,

¹ I am indebted to the kindness of Miss Butterfield for permission to use Mr. Butterfield's MS. Journal in her possession.

I rather inclined to the part of the Government than its opposers: But the latter end of K. James' Reign, when the Public Danger from Popery & arbitrary Power in the Prince began to show its effects on the Constitution, the Liberties & Properties of Particular Persons, & brought the matter home to me & every one, & the Danger grew still more palpable & imminent, I then began more seriously, & distinctly & impartially to consider the nature of Govern^t & the Constitution of the Church & was soon determined with the rest of the Clergy to give up Non Resistance, & resolved that no Authority is Sacred nor claims Submission but Legal; & consequently that if those in whose Hands the Legislative Power is lodged do employ it to the manifest Destruction of the community, for whose sake & Benefit it was committed to them, they may be resisted & deposed & the sword wrested out of their Hands by the People. Upon this Principle I resisted reading K. James's Declaration, wishd well to the Prince of Orange's Expedition, submitted to him (as the Clergy generally did) when K. J. abdicated, & he succeeded to him; & when the Convention of the States of the Kdom had invested him & his Consort Q.M. with the Regalities, I swore Allegiance to him consideratly & freely, tho' not hastily, & he having approved himself thro' the Course of his Reign a true Father of his Country, the most Legal Governor in Ch: & State as well as generous Deliverer of these Nations & of all Europe from Popery and Slavery; I payd him the most hearty Love & Obedience, as I do now the greatest veneratⁿ to his memory. Haveing discharged my mind from those slavish Principles of Govern^t in the State, with equal freedom I weighd the controverted Points of Religion, & came to this Resolution, that the more fundamental & essential Doctrines of Faith & good life being first secured, matters of opinion, & externals, modes & forms of Worship & Discipline are not to be impos'd or urg'd farther than is consistent with Peace & Charity.'

For such results no price might seem too high to pay; but at the period we have reached, opinions like these were still in the melting pot.

During the year 1686 indignation was strongly aroused at the religious persecutions in France. 'The Pope himself, tis said, is very Compasinat to the poor protestants beyond sea, and has rit to his Nuntia Fr. Lenenya to receve all as coms and give them protection, and will send all provisions as fast as hee can to them, Ittyly cannot furnish them so hee will order provisions out of Millan, hee is much ther frend and tis beleved will excomunycate the King of franc if he stops not his fury.'

In March John writes: 'The brif is red in severall churches for the protistants, bot many not satisfyed through whot hands the money shall goe, till it be ordered in hands to the minds of the publick, ther will not be much given.' Later on we hear of large sums subscribed by the City, and of collections made in private houses 'to the French Protestant Breife.' 'Dr. Lower hath given £100, my Ld. of Bedford £100, & people in his house 30s. more; Col: Russell £10, Wiseman the Surgeon £5. Three Merchants' houses in Basinghall St. have given £100 or thereabouts, one of 'em Sir Peter Vandgrat £20 himselfe, his 4 little children each a guiny, his Lady & Servants 4 or £5 more; another was Sir Jeremy Tambrooke, the third one Col: Grey and his partner both Barbadoes merchants.' In the teeth of this feeling, the King exasperated the City by authorising the building of Roman Catholic chapels against the law, while he attacked the privileges of the City companies in ways for which no plea of conscience could be advanced. King James has turned out 'many learned men of the Law,' and made ten new Serjeants; 'it was strongly reported that Williams or North should be Attorney General, since that honorable & worthy gentleman Mr. Finch is put out, and Sir Thos. Power is to be Solicitor Gen:'. The French are threatening Lisbon and fortifying themselves in the West Indies.

Mun gives voice to the savage hatred of Louis XIV. that was growing amongst the country squires. It is startling to hear so good-natured a man rejoicing brutally over the terrible details of the King's illness; no punishment is ade-

quate 'for his unparalleled cruelties to his Protestant subjects.'
 'The French King. . . will never be done, Demanding & Claim-
 ing & Destroying, and Taking forcibly until the Devill hath May 1,
1686.
 him. In the Interim I heare he stincks Alive, & his Carkass
 will stinck worse when he is dead, & so will his memory to
 all eternity. I am a most grievous & wicked sinner, yet I
 will not change my Condition with him if I mought, to have
 his Kingdom.'

The crowd show their Protestant sympathies in a congenial manner, and there are free fights between the City apprentices and the trained bands. 'On Sunday some boys and rabble were very rude in Lime Street, at the residence of the Prince Palatine, where the priests were at their devotions; one had his head broke, but by the help of constables and my Lord Mayor the rabble were dispersed, and some taken and committed'; on the Sunday following the same scene is repeated. Lord Powis, as a Roman Catholic Peer, was very unpopular. He had just built a grand house in Lincoln's Inn Fields and was known to be much trusted by the King. Mun writes how 'Mrs. Powis [his next-door neighbour] Lyeth now sick of the small Pox, in her fine new Dampe House, with her fresco shash windows & coole guilt leather & smelling Paint, & they say shee is with child, so it may goe hard with Her.' Penelope hears the Duchess of Grafton lament to the Queen 'that her father dyed a papist, but lately turned; she exprest much trouble, twas not thought wisely don to show it at court.' 'The D. of Albemarle has laid down all his com^{ns} on my L^d Feversham being made Lieut. Gen^l.'

John tells Sir Ralph 'that Mr. Lee [Lord Lichfield's July 7,
1686. brother] is said to be married to one Mr. Williamson a sergeant-at-arms' daughter, that lies at Westminster; it seems she and her sister used to come to the confectioner's where he lodged. I have seen and talkt to 'em; she is not a beauty, but her portion is £1,000.' 'Lady Henrietta Wentworth is dead & hath given all her Estate to her mother for life, & then to my Lord Lovelace, so shee will bee a brave match for Sir William Smith.' The latter had

recently lost his wife, Doll (Hobart), with less regret than the family felt to be her due. 'My Lord Chancellor's brother, Mr. Jeffereyes, lately consul at Alicant, hath received the honour of knighthood.'

The King is making a real effort to improve the efficiency of the army; he reviews single regiments in Hyde Park, and compliments Lord Lichfield on the smartness of his men; he is accessible to any private who can give him information. 'As the King came from Councell 7 or 8 Souldiers Scotch & Irish Presented themselves to him, who came from the Buss in Holland, his Maj: tooke one of their Musquetts in his hands & vewing it found it to be of a size longer then those his souldiers use: after discoursing them, he Ordered they should be provided for. . . . Abundance of people go out of town, to see the gallantry of the camp at Hounslow Heath, where it's said the officers will be extremely fine.'

The popularity of the camp is, however, endangered by the outrages the soldiers commit on the civil population; discipline must have been difficult indeed to maintain, when the officers were constantly engaged in fighting one another. 'Mr. Culpepper brother & heir to my L^d Culpepper shoots with a blunderbuss one Mr Minshull of the Guards, brother to him of Borton by Buckingham; Sir Richard Temple calls him cousin and says he was not dead on Saturday.' 'One Mr. Ash (whose mother was Nancy Harrington's eldest sister) being a small officer in the camp, was killed by Capt. Cooke (who bought Skipwith's command), who darted his sword at Ash and killed him, for which he is at present withdrawn. Capt. William Freeman, who killed Mr. Ralph Freeman, of Surrey, at Epsom, is at Calais, and some say Lord Dartmouth hath obtained his pardon of his Majesty.' 'Capt. Bellinger and Capt. Pack fought in Leicester Fields, the former was wounded, but parted by Harry Wharton and Mr. Smith.' 'The small officers' are amply warranted by the behaviour of their seniors. 'Admiral Herbert coming with Colonel Kirk from dining in the City to the Play House, cut (on what provocation I know not) Lord Devon-

Aug. 3,
1686.

Dec. 2,
1686.

shire's coachman; on which his Lordship said nobody should correct his servant but himself. I heard they were to fight, four against four. But his Majesty hath been pleased to prevent it.' 'A soldier pistoll'd a watchman in Southampton Buildings, saying, some time before, he had been affronted by a watchman there, of which he was resolved to be revenged, and therefore went to them and killed one, whether he that affronted him or another it mattered not.'

Murders are too common to excite much comment, but the civil worm turns at last when 'Six or 8 souldiers goe from the Camp to Robb an Orchard. The Provo's seized them, & bringing 'Em near their own Regiment, about 200 men with drawn swords Rescued 'em, & the Provo's made their Escapes into the Officers Tents, who protected 'em untill the Generalls came who appeazed 'em, yet 2 or 3 were Kill'd in the fray.' The sacred rights of property being thus threatened, 'His Majesty came himself to the Camp' to avenge the sack of the orchard, '& drew out the Army, where some of the Mutiniers were Punished.'

'On Sunday, the rabble got together again about the Welsh Camp (as they call the fields about the Cow-keeper Griffith's house) where with brickbates, which they had from a Brickill near at hand, and which they conveyed about with 'em in wheelbarrows, they pelted the Trainbands, but they did not any great hurt nor received any, only 'tis reported that handsome Fielding with his naked sword scower'd amongst 'em and wounded some of the rabble, and one of the Militia shot a maid dead (in the breast); she only came to see fashions. . . .' 'Tis said that Capt. Swifnix, who in Ireland would not deliver his commission to the Lord-General, is in that kingdom by 15 or 16 men cut to pieces; he was formerly a highwayman in England.'

'Some days past, a barge or pleasure boat going up the river, with four young women and a blackmore, were all drowned on their way to the Camp about Twittenham, by the barge's oversetting, but all watermen were saved; they

July 30,
1687.

were young Greenwich ladies, two of them great beauties, a third very handsome, the fourth plain; the eldest of them about 22 years, the beauties 15, and one of them an only child. On Sunday the rabble were again disorderly in Lambs Conduit Fields, and pulled down a Music-house Booth, making merry with wine and other liquors, and the brickbats did also fly about, but there was no mischief done, only one citizen (a scrivener, I think), coming thither to see fashions,' evidently a very dangerous amusement, 'was shot thro' the leg, and so was carried off, and one of his legs is since cut off.' There was the further excitement of 'a whale who came up as high as Woolwich, and was hunted and shot at and much wounded, but she made towards Gravesend, so I suppose she is got to sea again,' having had quite enough of the turbulent City. Dr. Paman writes that 'One in a coffee-house looked so earnestly upon Sir R. Le Strange, that he must ask what he meant—he said he took him for the observator—"Well, what then?" said Sir R. Saith the other: "I find you play very well upon the trump marine, who can vary so many several notes upon one single string; & besides they say you writ the Letter to the Dissenter." "You are mistaken, I answered it." "Nay then," saith the other, "you are mistaken you published it, but you did not answer it." An answer to the answerers of the Letter is come out, which hath wit in it.'

Nov. 21,
1687.

At Claydon, the joy felt at Sir Ralph's return to the House of Commons in May 1685 was damped by the prorogation of the Parliament in December, and by a grievous private calamity—the loss of John Verney's young wife. Her life came gently but swiftly to a close; the responsibilities of a wife and mother had been laid too soon on girlish shoulders, and though she carried them bravely, her strength was not equal to her courage and capacity.

May 20,
1686.

Elizabeth Verney died in London, in the twenty-second year of her age. When John buried his 'Dearest Joy' in the vault at Middle Claydon, he buried with her the happiest chapter of his life. There was no break in the outward activities of his career; he was not a man to trouble others

with his sorrows; to them he was the efficient, successful, rather cold man of affairs he had always been, but

‘God be thanked, the meanest of His creatures
Boasts two soul-sides—one to face the world with,
One to show a woman when he loves her!’

Sir Ralph was extremely unwell at the time of Mrs. John Verney's death, and the Claydon people, who are ‘heartily sorry’ to hear of it, are yet more anxious about their kind old landlord. Dr. Denton is pining ‘to let blood under his tongue,’ which Sir Ralph ‘has noe minde to.’ Coleman, the steward, writes: ‘I am soe concerned to hear your illness to continue, that I am not able at present to wright to you about any businesse for teares; my prayers I am sure & some hundreds in the County about you, are for your long life & health, both amongst us your Servants & them your neighbours . . . I will to the best of my power bee careful of all your businesse I am imployed in, & observe all your commands about Mrs. Verney's comeing downe to be buried.’ May 24,
1686.

John is attending to every detail of the funeral, and of the mourning for the motherless babies: they are to wear crape at 17*d.* a yard, Sir Ralph's cloth-crape costs but 14*d.* The portly coachman, Philip Buckley, is to have two specially large dimity waistcoats at 10*s.* and ‘a Pair of mild Serge breeches at 11*s.*’ Mrs. Lillie, the housekeeper, sends up ‘a bitt of silk for a pattern of the church cushings,’ which are evidently to be also garbed in black. Coleman writes again: ‘Here are people daily to inquire of your good health . . . most that know your Worship doe pray for your health, Mr. Butterfield last Tewsday praid for you in the Church & I hope it will please God to heare our prayers, it being I am sure from mee with an humble heart. Mr Fall & Mr Rutherford of Roxton was here at Mrs Verney's buriall, but did not stay to supp here, Mr White & his daughters & Mr Jos: Churchill & his wife & 3 children stay'd supper.’ May 29,
1686.

Mun, who is deeply grieved for his brother's loss, is at his wit's end to devise more remedies for Sir Ralph, as

'he hath been Blooded, Vomited, Blistered, Cupt & Scari-
fied, & hath 3 Physicians with him, besides Apothecary &
Chirurgien'; strange to say, 'hee continues still very weak.'



Mun himself takes 'Venice Treacle every night & many
other nasty Apothecarys things.' He is recommended
Islington, Epsom, or Tonbridge waters. Grosvenor believes

that the waters of Astrop, which he might drink at home, are 'as sanative as the waters about London, which are so chargeable they resemble those of Bethesda, which had noe virtew till an Angell had stirr'd them.' The invalids send their condolences to each other. 'I see you are weary,' Sir Ralph writes, 'of taking any more physicall things, but those that are either old or infirm must be content to doe it some Times.' Cary Stewkeley is in charge of Mun's household, a *persona grata* with him and with Mistress Molly, who has now returned from school.

There is another family funeral this summer; Alexander Denton (senior), of the Middle Temple, died June 8, 1686; the steward's bill for his burial at Hillesden, 'just by the old tower in the Chancel,' is 45*l.* 13*s.* 2*d.*, including 1*l.* 10*s.* 'for gold rings for Dr Sharpe & Dr Sherlock that gave my Master the Sacrament & prayed for him in his last illness.'

We have glimpses from time to time of the beautiful mistress of Hillesden; she is fond of her embroidery; Sir Ralph matches her silks in town, and she writes affectionately of her children. Suddenly a calamity falls on Hillesden House far more bitter to the family than aught that fire and the sword had wrought there during the Civil War.

Alexander Denton and Hester Harman were 'married in 1673 in Middleton Stony Church in Oxon by Mr. Banks'; the rest is told in John Verney's pocket-book. 'After she had had 7 children, on Thursday 29th March 1688, she left his house & him, & Monday Sept. 17, 1688, she was delivered of a girle, w^{ch} he w^d not own, named Eliz. who soon died.' There was a painful trial, in which it was held that as the unhappy woman had carried off with her a sum of 500*l.*, she had forfeited all claim on her husband for support; her own fortune he had long ago squandered. Sir Ralph wrote once to let Alexander know that he had heard of Hester in London; he only replied that he wished her at Jamaica. 'This his wife Hester died in Aug. 1691 about Spittlefields & was buryed in Stepney Ch. meanely.'

In the spring of 1687 Nancy Nicholas is 'disposing' of her only daughter Jenny 'in the wae of matrimony'; 'tis April 16, 1687.

April 26,
1687.

to one Sir John Abdy a Bart, of Albins in Essex, his estate is £1500, the house very well furnished thorow out, the joynter £600, no father nor mother, a debt of some £1400 that I hope they will wether out prety esily . . . heare are many qualifcations for making a wife happy.' The younger members of the family did not approve the match, and the mother allows that 'he is no baby, nor so fine a bred man as Sir Ralf Verney,' 'truly he bareth as various carectors as any man in England can doe . . . the sober prudint persons such as Sir Thos. Dike, Sir John Bramston & your once a quaintans Mr Garvis who has been 3 weeks in his house, says he was never drunk in his life, that he never gaimes, that he has not Sir R. V's parts, yet he understands his busines very well . . . he is good humoured, frank, and for entertainments in his house.' On the other hand he bore an 'ill carector in the titell tatell' of society, and among 'the sparks of the town & gentlemen that sett their cravat strings & periwigs well.' Jenny leant to their opinion, though her elderly suitor expressed himself as 'much pleased with her'; by the end of a fortnight her mother reported that the match was off, yet 'he importunes her every day to come on again, how her good natuer will work I know not for she is perfectly left to herself—tis she must live with him.'

May 1,
1687.

The girl was just of age, and 'Noble Soul' sympathised with her reluctance. 'Cosen Jinny Nicholas Cannot Love an old Man, and I cannot Blame Her, for old Age is very disagreeable unto youth: and I presume her ffather and Mother Have to much Kindnesse for Her then to fforce her. Cosen Doll: Wythers cast off this old Gallant formerly.' Whatever Nancy's theories might be, she was too much of a benevolent despot to be really neutral, and but ten days later Mun hears from Oxford that his son's chum, Denton Nicholas, has gone up with his father, mother, grandfather, and brother to attend Sister Jenny's marriage. 'I find that Jinny Nicholas,' Edmund writes, 'is now my Lady Abdy: and plentifully married: Hath a brave House and Land and Great store of good Goods, Besides Honor, of all wch I

wish her much joy.' The good wishes were realised; we hear the next spring 'that my Lady Abdy Doth Lye in of a Boy: to the great Joy of that ffamily,' and the child grows 'soe very sensible beyond his age that they fear for him.' It was Lady Abdy's delight to receive her father and mother and her grandfather at her country home, and the numerous Stewkeley and Adams girls were not forgotten. In September 'The Piazza family have gone to bury old Lady Nicholas at Horsely.' The Doctor is much at home at Albyns; he speaks of himself sarcastically as 'lolling on bed or couch,' of no more use in the world, though he can get no one else to think so. Any ailments in the family, however, speedily make him forget his own, and he prescribes for Sir Ralph 'a syrup of Scabious, with whey, or gorse boiled with Damask roses,' which sounds picturesque and delicious.

Meanwhile, in the great world outside, James II. was fast alienating his best friends. Dr. Paman describes how the Nuncio was received at Windsor: 'the King spoke to the D. of Somerset to receive him, but he refused, for by the law yet in force it was treason. . . . About 16 coaches attended the Nuncio; when he appeared he made 3 obeisances, the King & the Queen as often rose up. The D. of Grafton introduced him.' It is not surprising to hear after this 'that his Majestie is but slenderly met in his progress by the Nobility & Gentry of the Counties as he passes.' He is soon busy turning out magistrates from their commissions and officers from their commands, and a commission is going to Oxford 'with large powers of suspending, expelling, etc.' He had offended both Oxon and Bucks by dismissing their popular and capable lords-lieutenant, the Earl of Abingdon and the Earl of Bridgwater, who, as Lord Brackley, had won the famous election of 1685. Sir Ralph hears that he and 'Sr Tho Tirrell & Sr Tho: Lee are left out of the Commission of y^e peace'; the political animus of the transaction is shown by Sir J. Busby's being retained. The time was gone by when Sir Ralph might have been fretted by so ungracious an action; he writes with great serenity: 'If I am left out of the Comission of the Peace I shall have

April 7,
1688.

July 5,
1687.

Aug. 21,
1687.

Dec. 5,
1687.

the less trouble, & my yeares require a Writ of Ease, & I shall bee very willing to sit still.' 'Tho' you care not for it,' Dr. Denton writes, 'yet I believe y^r neighbours will.'

Magdalen College is next attacked. Lord Abingdon, who had stood by the King so stoutly during Monmouth's rebellion, 'sent to y^e fellowes of Magdalen wishing he had preferments for 'em all, but since he had not, that they should be wellcome at his house to Beef & Mutton—for which he had a reprimand from his Maj^{ty} for being soe kind to those that had been the Insolent oposers of his Maj^{ties} Comands, or words to that purpose.' At the same time it is rumoured, on the death of the great headmaster of Westminster, 'that one Poulton, a Jesuit, who was Schoolmaster at the Savoy, is to succeed Dr. Busby. The Doctor has left nothing to Sir J. Busby or his children, but all to pious uses.'

When James desired the clergy to read the Declaration of Indulgence from the pulpit, Sir Ralph can hear of 'none about us that read it, but 2 very ordinary persons, having but poor livings.' Anne Nicholas, writing from her daughter's home in Essex, makes merry over the way in which another clergyman endeavoured to neutralise the ill effect of his compliance: 'We have no news hear but of a Rector in this Cuntry, y^t when y^e declaration was to be Red, they gave it him up as he was going into y^e church to read, & he knew not what y^e paper was, & read it when he had don, "Beloved," sais he, "Hur has read you a paper y^t has nothing in it good for Body or sole, but Her will goe in to y^e Pulpit & preach that to you w^{ch} shall be good for Body & sol," & so Her did Make a Prechment to y^m.'

Aug. 1,
1638.

Nancy feels proudly that she has picked up another gem—'ye newest in Land news I have is of the Mayor of Scarborough, who came up to the K & profest if he might be maid Mair, he w^{ld} doe great things, in particular have the Declaration red; so he was put into his desired offes & afterward sent for ye Minister & gave him ye Declⁿ, but when ye time came he did not read it; & ye Mair maid him be puled out of his Pulpit & had another thair to read it; ye congregation sang Psalmes & a great bussel there was in ye church;

Sept. 11,
1638.

& when church was dun, ye soldears stood Redy & caut up ye Maior & tossened him in a blanket. The Mair is now in town, come up to complain of ye solders, ye chef offiser their was our cousen Ously.' Capt. Osley (as he is called elsewhere), being 'wanted,' retires to Holland.

When there is a question of prosecuting the contumacious clergy, Spratt, Bishop of Rochester in a manly letter gives up his seat on the Ecclesiastical Commission. Private patrons are anxious about their livings. Aug. 22,
1688.

Dr. Denton hears that 'Pigott hath endowed Ditton Chapel with 50*l.* pr. an: as a Donative, that it may not be subject to any ecclesiastical jurisdiction, his wife with 4 others to present but negatively noe nonconformist, his Almeshouse 2*s* a week apiece & 20*s* for a gowne.' 'The L^d Tirconnell & the Titular primate of Ireland have had some words, the former desiring him not to Ordaine soe many Ignorant, Dull, Priests as he did, for Ireland he said, did already swarm with them; whereat the Primate was soe angry that he is come into Eng^d to make his complaints.' Aug. 14
1688.

Within a few days of the birth of the long-desired heir to the Crown the seven Bishops were sent to the Tower, and there, writes Dr. Denton, 'they are most mightily visited, courted highly by the multitude at Whitehall craving their benediction, as they took water, and so again as they landed at the Tower so that they could scarce get into the Tower.' June 10,
1688. Sir Ralph 'longs to heare how the Bishops are treated, I pray God to make them ffirm to doe that wch may most conduce to his Glory & the good security of the Ch. of England.' 'On fryday the 29th The Bishops were tryed, Theire Jury were the twelve first returnd Excepting Sr John Bury & Mr Hewers w^{ch} two did not appeare. The Lawyers Argued on 4 Points in Each of w^{ch} Holloway & Powell differed from Wright & Alibone; for the K: Were the Attorney & Solicitor Serg^t Trindar, S^r Bar-Shores, Baldock, Wright. for the Bishops were ffinch, Pemerton, Polixfen, Sawyer & Ireby, Summers & one other who outdid themselves, after about 9 howres the Jury had a Glass of wine & a Crust of Bread at the Barr & then went to the affaire wherein thay came July 5,
1688.

not to a finall Agreement untill Satturday morning, when they came into Court & their Verdict was Not Guilty: at w^{ch} there was a greate huzza in the hall: tis said some of the Jury were very froward most of the night for a Contrary Verdict, & some presume to name them. Williams was twice hisst at the Tryall: The Councill Were 7 on Each side, There were about 36 Peeres present, & some observed when the L^d P^t came into Court to give his Evidence that the Peeres did then put on their hatts, those that were uncovered, Alsoe when finch was arguyng a Point wherein he said the K: Lords & Comons assembled in Parliam^t: (It being about the Lawes) the Nobility bowed to him Uncoverd as a testimony of their thanks. Powell spoke soe much that some askt if he were Advocate for the Bishops.'

The bonfires that were lit in honour of the Prince of Wales paled before those that blazed forth when the acquittal and release of the Bishops became known, and the fact that these latter were strictly forbidden only made them burn the more fiercely. Even loyal Oxford makes no sign when the news of the Prince's birth arrives: 'there was a bonfire at Magdalen, but at no other College.'

Aug. 8,
1688.

'Judge Roth^m speaking of the Bishops said they were Blockheads, noe Grammarians & that they wrote false English in their Petition & much more such stuff.' 'Judge Heath that came to Northampton and Leicester,' writes Pen Stewkeley, 'gave in his charge that all that made Bonifiers for y^e Bushops being freed, shoud be indited, for hee said it was a riat, & that they did not show themselves good subjects to theare King, but did it on purpos to Affront his magistey, & many such like things hee speakes. The Maior of Norhampton has killed a wagoner, y^t would not goe out of y^e roade his wagon being loaded, & theare ware 3 condemned for mordering an inkeeper, and proved plain against them, but its said y^e have presented Father Petters wth 500*l*., and y^e have a repreive, & its said none shall soffer, but those y^t made y^e bonifiers shall smart.'

July 4,
1688.

In London 'Tis said that Sir N. B. came out of his

house with sword in hand to suppress the Boyes that made Bonfires but they call'd him Quack & made him glad to take shelter againe.' 'At Buck^m there were a great many Bonfires for the Inlargement of the Bishops & great Acclamations of the people but without any tumult.'

'A Knight at Epsom that had spoak very reflectingly of the Bishoppes before their Tryall, when newes came that they were acquitted, severall Gentlemen went to him & accusd him of it, for which they said they would Toss him in a Blankett, But he profest his greate respect for those prelates, & that they were mistaken, for he onely told people what some Irishmen said of the Bishops; soe they seemd sattisfyed, but this comeing to some Irishmen's Eares, they to Justifye their Country came to the Knight, & told him for the falsity laid on their Country-men, unless he produced them, they would toss him in a Blanket publicuely, and twas with greate difficulty & shame that he Escaped.'

In London the rejoicings for the Prince of Wales' birth began during a heavy thunderstorm, but John considered that the fireworks made a good show on the Thames, '& after them the Greate Guns fired at the Tower & alsoe several vollyes of small shott at the Camp, which I could plainly heare on the Water.' The sound of the guns has hardly died away when 'The Lady Ash is confined to her house for speaking Scandalously of the P: of W: and other persons 'are seized for talking of him.' It was a strange fate for the heir to the Crown to be dubbed 'the Pretender' from his cradle to his grave. 'Kueller the painter has drawn the Prince' at about a week old, June 21, 1688. '& 20 copies are already bespoken of him. Tis said the D^{ss} of Monmouth is often at Court & the K. is kind to her children.' 'The Prince was severall times before his goeing to Richmond Carried by his Lady Governess [Lady Powis] into the King's Garden at S. James's to take the Ayre. A Bedd is sett up at Richmond for the Queen's Majestye to lye there sometimes when she comes to see the Prince. The King and Queen are at Windsor. . . . The Queen Dowager hath layd asside her thoughts of buying the Earl

of Devonshire's house in Darbyshire, & his Majesty hath perswaded her to settle nearer London.' 'At Whitehall the Fine Cristall Glass was taken out of the D. of Portsmouth's windows since she went away, & the holes stoppt up with straw very scandalously.'

Aug. 9,
1688.

'The Prince is Indisposed, having been fed on barley gruel with currants in it, 'twas thought fitt that he should suck, & a Plaisterer or Tylers wife was made Choice of, on whom some say the King hath been pleased to settle a Considerable pension for her & her husband's life Whether the Prince live or dye, & he is sent in some Comand into the fleet, & some say he was Knighted before hee went.' Not only is this illustrious individual sent to strengthen our defective Navy, but the Baby is formally made an Admiral.

'Abbot Barberini is to bring the consecrated clouts to England; they are 3 suits richly embroidered with gold.' The Prince was christened James Francis Edward, 'the Pope and the Qu. Dow^r Catherine of Braganza being gossips'; if the King's aim had been to alienate the sympathy of his subjects, the sponsors could not have been better chosen.

John writes: 'Reports are soe false soe different and soe many that noe true conjecture can be made, onely that wee seem to be Extreemly allarm'd, and worke hard as well Sunday as Workydayes to gett out a fleet, and the Dragoones are gone to the Sea Coasts, as well as other Regiments.' 'Drums are beating up about Wapping for seamen, but few come in.'

Aug. 3,
1688.

Ormond, the last survivor of the devoted King's Men of a nobler time, is taken away from the evil to come, and the young Duke appears at Windsor to 'deliver to his Majestye his Deceased Grandfather George & Garter. The late Duke's White Staff will not be disposed of until after the solemnizing of the funerall, where some say it shall be broke over the Coffin.' To emphasise the contrast between his father's servants and his own, we hear constantly of the favours King James showers on Jeffreys.

'On Tewsday the 17th at Bulstrode the Lord Chanc^{lors} Son (aged 15 very low of stature but a fine Schollar) was

married to the Daughter of y^e Last Earlof Pembroke by Portsmouth's Sister, & some say they were Againe Married after the Romish Manner the latter End of the weeke, very lately there was a Decree passed in the young Ladyes favour, she is 13 yeares of Age & taller then her husband. The King was pleased to Weare a Wedding favour of the Lord Chancel-^{July 26,} lours Sonns, and all the Privy Councellours had alsoe ^{1688.} favours given them.' Soon after the audience granted to young Ormond, the King and the Queen go down to Bulstrode Manor to dine with the Lord Chancellor and enjoy his refined society.

John is entertaining some of his late wife's family in August, who are staying with him in town 'to see Bartholemew Faire.'

The officers who have been cashiered for refusing to admit Irish Roman Catholics into their regiments 'behave themselves resolutely when tried,' and John believes their pictures will be sold 'as 'twas done for the 7 Bishops,' so great is their popularity. Much had been done to disoblige the army; the previous year Sir R. Temple is horrified that the King has turned 'Ch: Just: Harbert's elder brother out of a company bought for 800 guineyes, for refusing to repeat the Test, & the E. of Worcester out of a reg^t on the same acc^t who is succeeded by my L^d Powis' sonne.

Mun reports the Claydon news in return: 'I believe the ^{Aug. 11,} match between Mr Duncombe and Mrs Kitty Busby is quite ^{1688.} off again, & if she is to have 3000 pounds as I heare she is, I would not wish her such a monstrous clown for I think she deserves a much better.' The Duncombes were thrown into 'a great bustle,' the old man haggling much about settlements; there were even better jokes about the girl's father. 'Sir John Busby seeing his Lady's hoggs, wch I might say were his owne, muzeling some offal Corne by his Barne door, in a great fury charg'd his gun with great shott, fired & missed their bodies filthily,' but hit their legs; Lady Busby cries, and pays secretly for them to be doctored, being valuable beasts worth each 40s. When they recover, Sir John, as blind to his own interests as the King, shoots at

them again, with less murderous results than the weeping lady fears; one hog falls, the rest grunt, squeal, and disappear. Mun is greatly entertained by the vagaries of his hot-tempered neighbour, 'Sir Tarbox Busby,' as he is called in the squibs of the time.

On September 3, 1688, Edmund wrote from East Claydon another of his chatty letters to John in London. 'Deare Brother, I Received yours of the 29th last past, and understanding from my Cosen Natt Hobart and my Sonne what good sport There was at Quanton Race the first day where Chesney the Horse Courser made Thousands of Men Runne after Him with their Swords Drawne, He shott his Pistol at Sir Thomas Lees man Mr Cull, and overthrew Him and his Horse together, and swore Like any Lover that Hee would Have the other Pluck at Mrs. Hortons 5,000^l still, so the next Day I went my selfe to the Race, & Carryed my Cosen Cary and my Daughter in Hopes to meete with the Like diversion, But He was not so obliging to the Company as to Give them the same Pastime, so my Cosen Dentons man Valentine Budd Ridd for the Plate & wonne it, it was a Sylver server, his Horse that wonne it was a grey, There was a Child ridd over and almost Killed, & old Claver of Weeden fell off from his Horse Being very Drunk, I saw my Cosen Charles Stafford there, & severall Ladys and Gentlemen But not T: S, nor S^r R. T. nor S^r J. B. who is gone away no Body Knows where, nor no Body Knows when He will returne. S^r W.D. never came to the Race, w^{ch} troubles his Granddam Extremely, I Have a Storrey to Tell in the next Sheet, that will fill it up & so I shall conclude This who am your most loving Brother & sarvent

EDMUND VERNEY.'

The 'storrey' was never told. The next morning, hearing nothing till 8 o'clock, his servants went into his room, and sent a terrified message to Middle Claydon, that their master was sleeping so heavily they knew not what to fear. Sir Ralph arrived in his coach before nine; a surgeon was sent for, who bled him; 'the Queene of Hungary's water & severall other things were applyed to him, nothing would

recall him.' At ten it was all over, and Sir Ralph sat down in the desolate house, and sent an urgent appeal to John to make instant preparations for the funeral, concluding in a very shaky hand, 'God in mercy fit us all for Heaven, Your unfortunate father Raphe Verney.'

He encloses a list of Mun's household for whom mourning will be required. 'Dover his confidential servant, Harry the Coachman, Ned Smith the Groom, Thomas Very the



THE WHITE HOUSE, EAST CLAYDON

Carter, Tom Butcher a Footman, Jacob Golding a Footboy, & little Jacob Hughes about 9 yeares old taken out of Charity. Your Brother's Wife, your Brother's Daughter, Cary Stewkeley, Mrs. Curzon, Two Chambermaids that attend on his wife's person, Doll the Cooke, Anne the Dayry Mayd.' The names are written on the back and front of an old playing-card, another hint of the untidy condition of the house, where the kind-hearted, careless master had scarcely

breathed his last, before it seemed as if every one had a debt to claim, or a story to tell against him. Lady Gardiner describes Edmund's death as being, to himself, 'sudden, rather than unexpected; hee severall times told mee he was confidint hee was neere his end, & so thought all as knew him . . he had many virtues more than most men have.' His intercourse with his father had been specially affectionate and intimate during his last years, and he taught his children to look up to their grandfather in everything. His debts were no new thing. 'You will not pay them,' Sir Ralph had said, 'in ten years after I am dead.' Edmund would never suffer such an allusion; 'I desire not only the Honor to Bee (as I have been) y^r fellow Traveller in this World,' he wrote, 'but shall Bee Extremely well satisfyed & pleased to wayte upon you into the next, whenever it shall Please God to Summon you.'

The young heir was still at college; neither the widow, though just then in her right mind, nor the little terrified daughter could render Sir Ralph any assistance, and in those first miserable hours, when the old man was left alone in the deserted study to look through a mass of bills and papers, a great wave of bitterness swept over him, and he judged his dead son very hardly.

The money lent Edmund on bond, by the first rough computation, amounted to some 4,500*l*. 'I finde yr Brother died very much in debt,' Sir Ralph writes again to John, 'but as yet I cannot say how much, therefore in my opinion it will be the best way to bury him privately in the night-time, without Escutcheons, or inviting of Neighbours to attend with their Coaches, which is very troublesome & signifies nothing.' He is at no pains to conceal his mortification. To Sir William Smith he writes: 'You oblige me much by appearing sensible of the loss of my Sonne & if you knew in what a miserable condition he hath left his estate & Family, you would woonder at it, and hardly believe it; for its ill beyond Expression.' No monument is put up to his memory. Many relations show real affection for Mun, yet their chief anxiety is lest this should prove to Sir Ralph 'More affliction

than his age can well bear.' Pen Stewkeley writes: 'I pray God my Uncle may not lay this too neare him, but bare it like himselfe.' She must buy fresh mourning, hers is all worn out, 'having been a long time together in that dismal habit.' Dr. Denton finds a strictly professional ground for consolation, in that Sir Ralph had providentially taken his vomit just before hearing the news, and reminds him that Mun 'hath left a hopefull young son, who will contribute much to put the estate into a good condition again. We all wish ourselves wth you to have the comfort of one another.'

The elaborate mourning required keeps all the women of the family busy. Cary Stewkeley goes about with the steward and the carpenter, measuring the bed and the furniture in the widow's chamber which is to be entirely covered with black, and makes out lists for Sir Ralph, while doing her best to soothe and comfort Mrs. Verney and Molly. But it is upon the son of the house that the heaviest burden falls. Summoned hastily from his happy undergraduate life at Oxford, the boy of nineteen finds his home, so to speak, in ruins, and the father who had always been so good to him beggared at once of life and of reputation. Cary sums up what the family expect from the hope of Claydon, that he should do nothing 'to the prodigys of his helth,' and confide absolutely in his grandfather. Young Edmund shows good sense and feeling beyond his age. The situation is difficult enough; his mother's affairs and his own are in Chancery, and he feels himself 'but as it were a steward to my Father's creditors.' He is surrounded by old servants and retainers, who have large expectations from the heir, which he is quite unable to fulfil; he is trying to get the superfluous men-servants into places, but they are not at all keen to leave. His father's '2 great Horses eat up a deal of horsemeate, the Coach Mares do noe work, & the Greate Barne is so full of ratts, the wheat will soon be eat up & spoiled.' He tries to get in some arrears of rent, but his mother's tenants are clamorous in their requests, and with good reason; 'most of them assure me that my father promised them such & such repairs, others say their Houses were begun in my father's time

& I cannot tell what answer to make them.' One old man's 'actions,' Cary reports, 'is the wonder of markits as well as this towne, being called one of the Old Lords of Claydon; bot Harry Honnour has bin an old sarvant and so has his wife Doll, and both fixed heare, and therfore I wish them well settled, for I pittty every poor creature that has no shelter from wind and weather therfore care to say no more of him.' Mun dares not sell a horse because there are endless delays in making out the valuation, and he cannot even get in the undertaker's bill for his father's funeral; 'he is allwayes a burying somebody or other they tell me at his house when I call.' The garden alone seems to be in good order, 'very pleasant to walk in & the frute is as it should be.'

It is a solitary time at Claydon, for Sir Ralph and John are in town in October, but the lad writes them admirable business letters, and they write to him as regularly as they had written to his father. He is trying to disentangle the estate accounts, and to make out the 'rent-services, freehold rents & quitt Rents, which did use to be mingled in the Rent-roll, with the other rents,' and to settle with a tenant whose sheep 'have flayed the fields.'

Oct. 11,
1688.

Sir Ralph sends 'Munsey' excellent advice. 'Be sure to give your Mother's Tenants good words but make none of them any promise for repaires, only that you'll consider of it, & acquaint me with it when I come, tis not a time of year for building, for the frost will fetch the mud walls whilst they are green & the days are growing so short that workmen cannot do a good day's work.' He recommends a ratecatcher, and warns Mun against being enrolled in the Militia in these unsettled times; he must plead youth. Sir Ralph breaks off abruptly, 'to write news is the way to have this letter stopped therefore tis best to leave all alone.' The lad has no wish to keep up the convivial reputation of the White House, but Cousin Denton is going to visit him and will expect claret: can Sir Ralph furnish him? 'There is white wine, Sack & Rhenish in the house, but were I not sometimes bound in civility I should never care to drink a glass of wine as long as I live.'

John has got for his nephew 'a gentile & fashionable mourning sword for 7/6.' Cary Stewkeley rejoices that the widow Mary Verney has been sensible enough to dine with them these four days, 'she is one I love extremely.' Later on Cary Gardiner visits the White House, and gratifies poor Mary by taking her constantly to Middle Claydon Church; though the elder lady feels the two miles troublesome to her, ' & the more because I walk in patings.' 'All the congregation seems to rejoice to see her; good woman shee is very kind to mee, and Indeed I pleas her all I can.' When Mary is well 'she works from six to six,' April 14 1689. but she usually spends much of her day in bed; her room is damp 'nevor seeing the sun & the hangings mold in it'; the watchman on his rounds hears her crying out for her maids in the night.

Lady Gardiner's account of Moll's wardrobe is tragic if somewhat mysterious. 'She is forst to ware her blak coat Feb. 1689 under her whit fustion, & tis a ridiculos sit to see her whit coat next her cloth crape coat for A father; she must have stoff to make her a petycoat to her night gownd, her old callowco petycoat I shall leve as far as it will goo & she must have 5 or 7 of the narrow lases weh Bell has on hers & blk silke to make it up; she must have 3 yds of any blk cloth crape to peas out her crape coat weh is to short to ware for shee is much growne. Bell must bespeak a pare of blak leather shus for her & charge the woman to make them strong, the very sols of her shus is worn off, she w^d have them hansom as well as strong. She rons much A bout, & tis better to ware out her cloths then be sickly; she wants 2 blk top knots of tafety, a pare of blk leather glovs & some blk pins—weh things if she could be without them I wod not rit for them.'

The attention of the relations has been concentrated on East Claydon, but public events are now too grave to be ignored. 'War is in the air,' and such of the family as are living in London have the cheering conviction that the Metropolis will be the Seat of War. Riots increase; 'all meat risis in town & everything is snatched up, fearing the

Nov. 11,
1688.

prince of orange sh^d stop provisions comeing to this toune.' 'The rabble very rudely went to Barge Yard, defaced the Popish Chapel, breaking the windows, drinking up the Priest's liquors both wyne & beare, carrying out what portable, to make a bonfire in the Marketplace, L^d Mayor's show was very poor this year.'

Oct. 29,
1688.

Young Edmund had seen some of the dreaded Irish troops at East Claydon. 'This day passed by here 500 Irish ffoot souldiers in their march to London, & just at the townes end they quarrel'd amongst themselves about going over a stile in Newfield, and one of them was knock'd down & his scull much broken & he now layes insensible at Thomas Millers, 'tis thought he will dye very shortly if he is not dead already.'

Dec. 5,
1688.

Sir Ralph, on his return home in November, is roused up at two o'clock in the morning to send men and horses for the Militia levies at Stony Stratford within twelve hours, 'all the Buck^m trained bands are gon with thos forces as is to march against the Prince.' On the whole there is a strong feeling that 'the King will put all to a push & fight,' and this in spite of the desertions to the Prince of Orange, and the Princess Anne's 'prank, weh dus not a littell displeas the King.' Cary Gardiner reports the town talk, 'that ther is grat hops of a hapy Settillment in fue months, all the protistants being in most things of a mind, & believed no blod will bee shed in warr, & that our King will rain more happily than he has dun, only thar is great doubts maid how the title of the P. of Wails [no bad name for that luckless infant] will be desided. . . . The Princ marchis slow his resons is not known.' Lord Abingdon and Tom Wharton were amongst the first to join his standard. The story Lord Macaulay has told once for all need not be repeated, but after reading in the letters day by day of the contradictory rumours that keep up the tension of suspense in London, one feels that Cary sums up the situation admirably to Sir Ralph, who is awaiting events at Claydon: 'You will wonder at nothing now. Sertainly no Cronacill can paralell whot has bin produced in a fue

Dec. 12,
1688.

weeks time—to have A King & Prince of Wales & A Queene fly from an Invader without A blow. . . . Ther is so many gon in A Weeks time as wod A mase you ; night & day the water is full of barges. . . . Sir R. Temple is this day gon to the Princ, but thos as gos in now signifys Littell bot are rather laughed at. . . . We expect the Princ here, in the mean time the moboly will pull downe all the chapels as is nuw set up. Skilton is fled & the City has seased the Tower . . . I thank you for your fat plovers & so conclud.' Dr. Denton writes: 'We are all in a strange confusion, abandoned by K, Qu. & Pr. all gone cum pannis, confounded be all they y^t worship graven Images & boast themselves of idols. . . . Its said y^t my L^d Chan^r is gon along with them & consequently ye Seales, & a world more gone or goinge.'

There is great excitement in Buckingham when 'a calash dashes thro' with 2 gentlemen attended by 26 horsemen well armed & mounted,' whose blue coats are lined with orange serge—a new colour in English politics ; great ladies are lining their petticoats with orange silk.

When Jeffreys abused Sir Ralph so bitterly after the famous Bucks elections, Cary wished to see him a changed man before he died ; his worst enemy must have been satisfied. John's letters in a crisis are as calm as a bill of lading, but the plain facts are too dramatic to need any dressing up ; 'the L^d Chancellor yesterday morn goeing a long in a seaman's habit in Anchor Alley in Wapping was discovered, his Lordship presently told the discoverer he would goe along with him but desir'd him to keep it private for fear of the people soe they went into an Ale house by & sent for a Constable, who with a Guard brought him to Town, all the people huzzaying, & with difficulty did his guard keep him from the Rabble, nay one did strike at him, he was brought in to the Lord Mayors just at dinner time who when he saw ye L^d Chan : thro' feare fell a Cryeing then into a fitt, for which he was blouded & put to Bed, soe the Lord Mayor being ill he coud not sign any warrant, the L. Chanc: satt downe & Eate heartily, but turning about he saw Sr Rob^t Jefferyes Late Mayor who cryed & came to kiss his

Dec. 13,
1688.

hand & then the L: Chan: alsoe cryed, he said what have I done that people are soe violent agst me, one answ^d: Remember Cornish, he said he would have savd him, but when he could not he savd his Estate, & had not a penny for't, at length My Lord Lucas took charge of him & convey'd him to the Tower, he design'd for Hambrow & the Vessell was fitting with all Expedition wh: created some jealousy that some greate person was to goe off in that ship. The K. left the D. of Northumberland asleep in his chamber when he went away.' John had dined with the Lord Chancellor some six months before, 'being feasted by him as being one of his Jury.'

Dec. 13,
1688.

London went through a short but anxious crisis. John describes the sacking of the Spanish Ambassador's house, and how 'The Mobb' [an abbreviation of *Mobile vulgus* now first coming into use] carried away the very boards and rafters. 'The Ambr valued his library at 15,000*l.*, the Plate, Jewells, Clothes, etc., were of vast value and Papists had carried all their best things thither presuming they would be safe. Ld. Powis has removed his things & my Lady lyeth at a neighbour's for fear they sh^d come thither.' John's friend Mr. Fall 'is a great sufferer, his windows are all beaten down & his house defaced.' 'Sir Henry Bond's fine house at Peckham' is threatened. 'The Capt. of the Trainbands (one Douglas) guarding the Florentine Resident's house in the Haymarket, was shot dead, 'tis beleivd by one of his own men. . . . Aunt Adams was up all night for fear of the Mobb there being 7 Papists, lodgers in her house.' The terror of the Irish night is still upon John as he writes: 'Last night twixt 1 & 2 we were all alarm'd by Drums & Bells that the whole Citty and subburbs were up, upon a Report that the Irish were assaulting houses & killing people near the townes End, all men gott to their arms & lighted Candles in all their Windowes & at their doores, but about 4 or a little after we began to be undeceiv'd & soe went to bed again leaving one or two in a house up: my Aunt Adams heard nothing of this for I sent to Covent Garden this morning to knowe how

they 'all doe; In James Street & in the Piazza they were up upon the alarm.' Lady Abdy writes that the panic spread over 'most parts near London but the Irish did no harm but by their big words.' The best news John can send is that the King has gone off for the last time escorted by the Prince's Guards; 'tis said he wept as he left Whitehall, the P. of Orange is at St. James'. 'His Majestie's going away is of great consequence higher than I can understand,' writes the prudent Mr. Cary, but to most people it meant that the game was up; the strong hands that now grasped the reins were not likely to drop them.

Sir Ralph and Sir R. Temple represented Buckingham once more in the Convention Parliament, that sat from January 1689 to February 1690, and did such memorable work for England. There is great joy in Bucks; Lord Bridgwater is reinstated, and old Dr. Townsend, who has scarce finished preaching obedience to Nero, beseeches Sir Ralph to get his son made 'Muster Master for the Train bands of the County,' under the new King. 'Sir R. Temple April 14, 1689. has his custom hous place again. I find he will be Vickor of Bray still, let who will raing, & tho' all hats him yet hee gets whot he aims at.'

Mun has been over to Oxford to pay up his bills, and 'has given a Treate to his Acquaintance in Trinity College.' His sister is anxious to join him in London for 'the Crowne-nasion, and I want clothes so mitily that I doe not know what to do, they will scarse hang on my back.' A tailor's bill for 'a close fitting Taby jacket' seems to prove that Molly had her wish.

The oppressor being dethroned, men are now free to pity him, and to find fault with their deliverer. Cary writes to Sir Ralph: 'I hear the K is bying the E. of Nottingham's March 19, 1689. hous at Kensington & implys 700 men in fitting Hamton Court for him, & the coronation I heare is talkt of, all thes things requires great sums of money: I confes popery wod A bin much wors for that wod A destroyed thousands of bodies & souls & estates in A short time; bot I heare there is

great discontents now. I have sent you the K's speech wch I liked & disliked, hee being subject to sinsures as well as his meanest subjects.

'I was apt to beeleeve King James was dead, not for the report of it, but because I think hee has a load heavigh enoufgh on him to waigh downe the greatest speryted man in the world: and ware hee the bitterest enymy to mee I could not but pity him, and bee glad to heare he had dyed a naturall death, afflictions causing too often great sperits to mak them selvs a way, w^{ch} I pray God presarve all christians from; I am satisfied by him and others that grif kills none; but God knows what is fittest for all, and therefore best to soffar patiently and wait till ther chang cometh.' There is still a ground swell after the storm, and Cary continues, 'I cannot bot put the present differences of thos as sits at the Helm amonxt my own afflictions, I feare a cevell worr, sine both Ch: & Laety are so divided, & poor Iorland Lys a bleding.'

Feb. 1689. Young Lady Cavendish, daughter of Rachel Lady Russell writes of the first drawing-room of William and Mary: 'The King applies himself mightily to business, and is wonderfully admired for his great wisdom and prudence in ordering all things. He is a man of no presence and looks very homely at first sight; but if one looks long on him, he has something in his face both wise and good. But as for the Queen, she is really altogether very handsome, her face is very agreeable, and her shape and motions extremely graceful and fine. She is tall, but not so tall as the last Queen. Her room was mighty full of company, as you may guess.'—*Devonshire MSS.*

CHAPTER LVII.

EXEUNT SEVERALLY.

1689-1696.

As the eventful seventeenth century draws to its close, those who have played their parts with Sir Ralph in the Claydon drama are gradually leaving the stage. While their places are being filled by a younger set of actors, a word may be said concerning the exits of some old friends.

In the elder generation, the evergreen and incorrigible Tom claims the first place. He is still liable to sudden and unaccountable changes of abode, and his 'quarteridge' has of late been claimed from Welsh villages whose many-syllabled names have the desired flavour of remoteness. He was unreasonably abusive of a world in which he found so many kindly dupes, and flourished unabashed till 1707, when he was well over ninety. He then died 'merely of old age, his speech and memory perfect to the last.' Richard Seys of Boverton, Cardiff, writes to inform John Verney that 'ye April 1. 1707. old gent: y^r uncle has at last gone to his long home, I find his late quarterly Revenue (like many of ye former) was in a great measure Anticipated, but Jⁿ Deere by keeping him for some time to a weekly allowance has cleared all his old scores.' He died possessed of '22^s & 1^d' and John asks Mr. Deere whether he had not 'some goods, as Books, Clothes, Plate, etc. wch being disposed of w^d suffice for his burial, without either you or I being out of pocket for your old acquaintance & my relation, whom I never saw in my life, tho' he hath had many a pound from me.' The venerable Tom's personalty consisted of 'a Bible & a Treatise of piety,' but

he was 'very decently interred' at his nephew's expense, 11. being spent in distributing bread to the poor 'by his own desire,' and he was 'attended to his grave by a numerous company of the Neighbourhood,' the bell-ringers were properly fee'd, and the genteeler guests provided with wine, so that there is room for hope that Tom may have been satisfied at last!

Penelope was made to be a spinster, and though she twice attempted to frustrate Nature's design, her temperament was never really affected by marriage. She soon tired of Sir John Osborne's society, and was not more afflicted than good manners required when she was again left a widow. But as the infirmities of age increased, her thoughts reverted with some autumnal gleam of tenderness to the baby-girl she had lost forty years ago. 'After driving up & down in the streets in my Coch, by 6 or 7 of ye clocke I am at home; & do find ye nights so long,' but when she adds 'had God blest me with a Dau^r I had not kept a maid,' her theory of the uses of a daughter explains the reluctance with which her niece and namesake accepted Dame Penelope's invitations. 'My lady only wants me to wash up her old crape and such like work,' Pen Stewkeley declared. It was Lady Osborne's boast that she 'had lived a Laborious Life to make a fine shoe to the world, never to wayst one shilling to giv my selfe plesur,' and that was not the kind of housekeeping to make a young relation very comfortable. Like her sisters, she was skilled in domestic medicine; for a cold in the head she mixes an equal 'quantity of White Hellebore root, & nutmeg grated, to take as you do snuff, it clears the brain; & bind conserve of Reddrosis upon y^r eyes layd upon a cloth prity thick'; at other times she recommends white rose water for the eyes, and a syrup of gillyflower cordial. Dame Penelope was 'at home on Mondays to receive visits & they that please may play at cards.' The genteel persons who found their way to her rooms 'on the stairs at Whitehall' gossiped familiarly about the King and the Queen, in a way that would have delighted the Cranford ladies. But some of her grand friends are in

queer straits. 'Her favourite L^d Peterboro' [on the brink of an impeachment] has removed all his things from his house in the country, even sold all Iron off his very gates, & puld down his wainscot, & sold it, nothing remains but the bare walls & windows.' He, like some others of Penelope's acquaintance, had followed King James's change of faith, and Nancy Nicholas writes to Sir Ralph of a curious scene in Lady Osborne's death chamber. To the consternation of her relations, the dying woman desired the Countess of Lindsay, who was standing by the bed, to get her a priest, and 'for fear of the worst' Nancy undertook 'to write afterwards to her Ladyp.' 'I know she is yr particular frend,' she tells Sir Ralph, ' & so I would not willingly disoblidg her, but in matters of this concern, we cannot be too cautious wher soles air concerned.'

'Anne Nicholas to the Countess of Lindsay:' 'Yr La^p may well wonder at yr receiving these lines from me, being a quit stranger to you, but this coms in ye first place to give yr La^p thanks for yr great cair & Kindnes to my neare relation ye La' Osborn, who I heare in lightheartednes last night desired yr Lad^p to bring her a Prest; I bescech yr Lad^p not to gratify her in this request, not yt I thinke her capable now to make any judgment of any religion, but Sr Ralph is of a great adg, & I feare such a shok now might hasten his end. I would have wated on yr Honnor, wⁿ you had bin at ye Lady Osborn's but yt my breth wont lett me goe upstairs & would have told you yt she hasn't nor won't want ye attendance of ye devins of our Church, for Mr Lankister & one in her own neyghborhood doth & will atend her.'

Penelope died on the 20th of August, 1695, aged 73. Her will is full of bequests to the great ladies it was her happiness to know; 'The C^{tes} of Lynsey' has a silver scallop cup and grater, 'The C^{tes} of Plymouth a serpentine cup with a silver cover, the C^{tes} of Carnarvon a Silver Toster to toast bread on, Lady Temple, a Bible with silver clasps & a candlestick, Lady Anne Walpole a cup, &c. &c.,' 5*l.* is left 'to a schollar from Oxford to preach her funerall sermon, £1 to the Parson that buries her, £300 to ye town of Buck^m

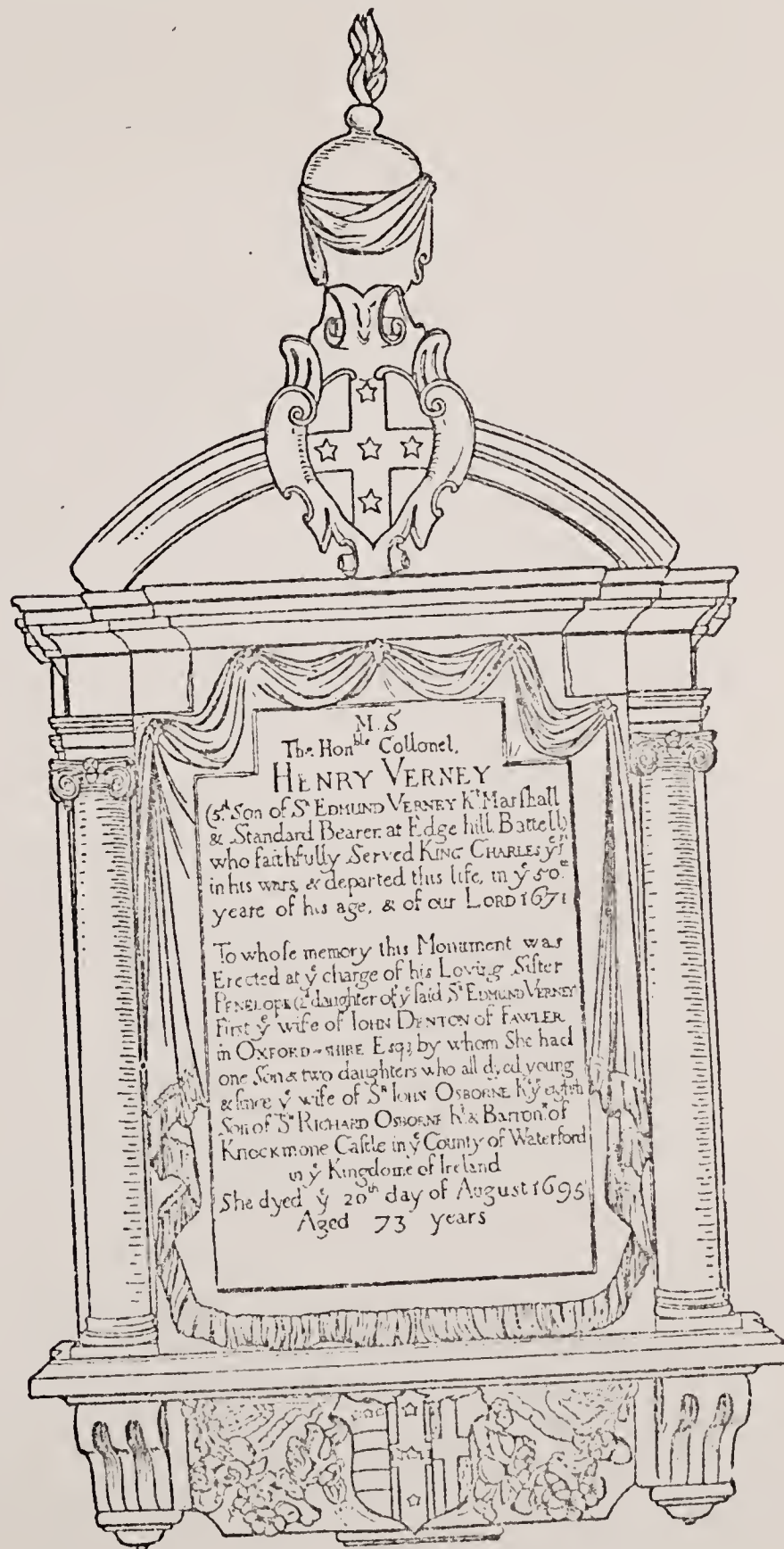
the Interest of it for 6 Poore men, who are to have Green Gownes once in two yeares with a Badge of her father's Armes, Sr R. T. to name them during his life, & afterwards the Bailiff of Buck^m to fill up the Vacancies for Ever.'

All her nieces are remembered. Pen Stewkeley is appropriately left the clothes she had often helped to mend; but the legacies are carefully graduated. Lady Osborne felt that her silver plate and valuables could only be given to rich people who would take care of them; a pewter vessel, a brass chafing-dish, or a wooden table were bequests more suited to needy relatives, and when the poor parson's widow, Betty Adams, was reached, Nancy tells Sir Ralph that she is left 'Y^r picture & much lumber.' 'She died as she lived, I will say no more.'

One person alone had seen a more genial side of her character; Penelope wrote in old age, 'from my childhood I have loved my Brother Harry Verney, out of my narrow fortun I supplied him wth money & wanted myselfe; severall yers before he died I was his nurs, & this return he maid me that he truly loved me . . . I dare say no more upon this subject. I find it puts me to a sort of illness. . . . To my Deare brother's memory I have maid this thome . . . & all thoms dos make appere ye honer of our family & Adorns ye Church.' She was laid beside him in the vault at 'Middle Claydon, and her name added to 'the An scription' on the monument. Her arms occupy the centre of the shield, and those of her two husbands are in subordinate places; typical of the lady who, though she kindly consented to bear the names of Denton and Osborne, was first and last and always a Verney of Claydon.

Cary Lady Gardiner, quick-witted and warm-hearted, was no one's enemy but her own, and if she lost money as fast as her sister hoarded it, she was rich in the affection that Penelope had never known how to win. At Claydon she and her girls were special favourites. Cary Stewkeley lived chiefly at East Claydon, Caroline and Isabella were at home. Penelope (Viccars) and Kitty (Ogle) were married. Her blind daughter Margaret Gardiner lived with her, 'very

sad to be quite dark.' Her stepdaughter Ursula, with all her madcap friends, never seems to have found a mate. Cary Gardiner died at Islington, September 2, 1704, and



was buried 'at Bray in Berks in a vault by her last husband.'

Feb. 22,
1681.

Of Mary Lloyd, but little has come down to us. From John Verney's pocket-book we learn that her children were Humphrey (b. 1657, d. 1715), Verney (b. 1670), Mary (b. 1666), and Ruth (b. —, d. 1725). Mary Lloyd died in 1684; her husband, Robert Lloyd, survived till 1695. Her letters are very bare of news, she acknowledges a 'kinde token' from Sir Ralph and signs 'yooare disconsolatt sister'; but the fact that a brass to her memory was put up in Chester Cathedral seems to imply that she was in easier circumstances in her latter years.

The tablet itself had a curious story; in 1776 'in new flagging the broad Ile of Chester Cathedral an inscription in brass almost worn out upon a gravestone was disturbed by the workmen, when there appeared another inscription still legible on the reverse.' Mr. T. Crane had the brass conveyed to his own house to copy the inscription, as the name Verney caught his eye. He sent it to his friend Sir John Chetwode asking him for the address of Earl Verney, 'who will not be a little proud of this epitaph which I have rescued from oblivion.' The brass, however, disappeared again, but the inscription was preserved in an old guide-book, and Sir Harry Verney and his eldest son, with the cordial co-operation of Dean Howson, put up a new brass with the old words on the south wall of the nave.

There is a letter to Lady Gardiner from 'Ensign Verney Lloyd in Col. Beaumont's Reg^t at Mr James, at The Three Herrings in little Lombard Street London.' He is twenty-two years of age, and has been serving 'under the D. of Leinster's command in Flanders, fortifying Dixmunde; the King has called us over to England, where we expect (as the Eldest Reg^t) to do duty in the Tower. 'Tis thought that 10 companies belonging to our Reg^t is cast away in the last great storme. . . . Had I Sir Ralphe's Countenance I neede not question a Company, for I daily see it that nothing but friends does the businesse, and upon the least Countenance in the World I should be advanced, for the colonell hath a

great kindness for me.' Col. Beaumont is Governor of Dover; John Verney meets him at Sir Francis Lawley's.

Sir Ralph was glad to use his influence for a nephew who did him so much credit, and his letters show that Capt. Verney Lloyd kept up intimate relations with his mother's family. In 1704 Ruth Lloyd has taken a place as a waiting-gentlewoman, 'but has hir health so ill in sarves' that unless both her brothers help her, 'she cannot tell how to live.' Her sister Mary visits at Claydon in 1706, and is a friend of John's daughters. Capt. Verney Lloyd married Anne Gery; his daughter Elizabeth Lloyd married John Jackson, a solicitor, the secretary and intimate friend of the 4th Duke of Leeds. Their descendants were distinguished in the Church and in various branches of the public service, and several members of the Jackson and Warren families still trace their descent from Sir Edmund Verney the Standard-bearer, through his daughter Mary Lloyd.

In the Church of St. Mary le Virgin at Great Baddow where an ancient ivy covers the whole tower, a black marble slab still records that: 'Below (near those of his own mother & his only son) is the body of the Rev^d. and pious Mr. Charles Adams M.A., who having been a burning and shining light in the Church about XX. years . . . departed hence Sept. 1, 1683, ætat 45'.¹ His widow, 'seeking sum good plas to lay my grey head in,' settles herself in London; her daughters Margaret and Isabella are more popular than Betty had been as a girl, and are in great request. Betty still enjoys a good grumble; 'old & poor peopell,' she says, 'must expect slits from all sorts,' and she fails not to look out for them. She died December 27, 1721.

Dr. Denton's life, prolonged to the age of eighty-six, was vigorous and fruitful to the end. In middle life he had been more of a Royalist than Sir Ralph ever was, but so heartily did he approve of the Revolution, that one of his last literary efforts was a work, 'Jus Regiminis,' dedicated to William III., vindicating the King's position and the

¹ I am indebted to David Houston, Esq., for this information.

May 9,
1691.

action of the English people. In 1691 Sir Ralph hurried up from Claydon on the news of the Doctor's illness, and as they were together we have no account of his last hours—only that 'Mr. Banck of Preston preacht his funeral sermon,' and a crumb of gossip that Sir Richard Temple failed to appear, after his cousin's death, in all the 'blacks' he was in duty bound to wear. The Doctor himself would have justified Sir Richard. His very epitaph in Hillesden Church has the joyful note which was so conspicuous in his life: 'He was blessed with that happy composition of Body & mind that preserved him chearfull, easy & agreable to the last, & endeared him to all that knew him.'

At the White House there are great reforms; young Edmund, with Sir Ralph's advice, is getting the estate into order, and making a happy home for Molly. The brother and sister are very attractive figures; they are much attached to each other, and full of promise, when, in the spring of 1690, Edmund sickened of a fever in town, and though devotedly nursed by Lady Gardiner and her daughters, and attended by a crowd of eminent doctors, 'as industrious to save him as if he were a king,' he succumbed to it in a few days, before he had completed his twenty-second year. Life was very bright to him, full of hope and ambition, and he fought hard for it; but to the comfort of his family he made a pious end, praying for his grandfather, and grateful for all the love that surrounded him, 'and many good things he said, but tis no wonder to see a man as has lived well, dy well.'

Once more a little fatherless girl is the heiress of the White House and of the manor of East Claydon. Molly's trouble is so great that Lady Gardiner is quite anxious about her; she thinks much of her father, who was 'most tender & loving to me & I being grown up to be A companyon to my last brother makes his loss very bitter to me.' She is a tall slight girl of fifteen, and the sense she has suddenly acquired of being 'grown up' makes her resent her grandfather's orders that her mourning should be 'as little & as cheap as possible, seeing she grows apace.' She



ELIZABETH VERNEY, WIFE OF THE REV. CHARLES ADAMS

writes her own protest to Sir Ralph; she would have a cloth gown as Mrs. Mary Gardiner has for her sister. 'I know my morning will cost a good deall of mony, but I beleve you wod have me morn hansomly for so deare a brother, and since ther is none left but myself to morn for him, and I beg that I may have a tipit bought me, since every gentellwoman has one as makes any show in the world, it will cost 5*l.* at least and my lady Gardiner is unwilling to by it till she has orders from you, but I hope if I do gett one you will not be angry.'

March 4,
1690.

Sir Ralph is touched by the child's sorrow and sudden assertion of dignity, and replies kindly: 'I cannot blame you for being so much concerned for the death of soe good a Brother, the loss being Generally great to all his ffriends & Relations, I pray God to Sanctify this Affliction to us, that wee may make good use of it. Since you desire Cloth for Mourning, I will not be against it, And I hope you will weare it with the more care & make it last the handsomer & the longer. I perceive you are very desirous to have a Tippet, I am contented that you should have a very good one, though it should cost Five or Six pounds, and I pray tell my sister Gardiner soe: Child you see how desirous I am to please you, and I doubt not but you will be as willing to please meo in all things which I shall desire of you, which will be a great satisfaction and comfort to me.' The tippet is highly approved of, and Lady Gardiner is doing her best to persuade Molly to eat, 'for her dyat is not as others; I take all the care I can of her, as the only relleck of yr eldest son.'

March 9
1690.

When she is settled again at East Claydon, the girl finds the house dull and sad, and the great difference in age between herself and Cary Stewkeley makes Cary, after Mun's death, the duenna rather than the companion of her young cousin. Molly longs for London, where a happy part of her childhood was spent at Mrs. Priest's school; but Sir Ralph dreads for her the chances of infection, which have proved fatal to both her brothers. The lonely girl's chief confidante is a waiting-maid of her mother's, of doubtful

discretion. Sir Ralph hears a report that 'Mr. Dingley, a Divine, under pretence of wooing the waiting-maid, Kate Bromfield, carries down a younger brother of quality with designs on Mrs Molly Verney,' and that they are lying at the lonely old house of Dorton, 'with design to ride over to East Claydon.' Instead of getting Molly to stay with him in town, where she might enjoy the companionship of girls of her own degree, and quietly dismissing the maid (as a woman would have done), Sir Ralph, in great anxiety, writes to his steward Coleman to intervene at this delicate crisis.

The man of affairs accordingly arrives at the White House, desires the attendance of the ladies, unfolds his story, and conveys to them Sir Ralph's commands that no such guests be received on any pretext, and that 'Mistress Molly pretend some excuse & keep her chamber.' Mrs. Cary desired a copy of the letter; Mrs. Molly expressed no opinion, 'only read it & gave it me again & went away.' But Coleman had an uneasy feeling that he had not got to the bottom of the matter, for the young lady 'was seen A crying, & I fear by what I can understand that Mrs. Mary Verney may have too much kindness for Mrs Brumfield.'

Mary, who is quite capable of 'pretending an excuse' when it suits her, without the help of Sir Ralph or his steward, keeps her own counsel, but a little later she is much vexed that Sir Ralph will not allow her to bring Mrs. Bromfield to London as her attendant. She shall be provided with a maid, and Mrs. Verney must not be left without Kitty Bromfield's care; to which Molly replies promptly that her former maid Mrs. Norman is now out of place, and will take care of her mother, to their mutual satisfaction; and she thinks her grandfather cannot be 'unsenceable' that she would prefer a maid 'that is used to me, & knows all my ways then any stranger.' She writes respectfully, but very warmly on the subject, excusing her bad writing 'for they are at Cards about my ears being my birthday, that I can scare tell what I writ,' a fact amply proved by her signing herself 'Yr most dutyfull and obedient Granfather to command, Mary Verney.'

After this her marriage becomes a pressing consideration, and as if hearts, like houses, could be let unfurnished, Sir Ralph is in treaty for her with Mr. Dormer, a family whose former relations with her father had never been friendly. Molly submits for a time, but with increasing distaste; she complains equally of Mr. Dormer's attentions, and of the lack of them. She had seen the ignominious downfall of passive obedience, the right of private judgment was in the air, and when authority wished to give her a lord and master she had grown to detest, she managed with skill and dexterity a revolution on her own account. Happily, the man to whom she gave herself away proved not unworthy, though he came by his authority in an unconstitutional manner.

Mary disappeared one summer's day from her uncle John's house, leaving a startling note behind her: 'Sir, I have bin for some time married to Mr Kelynge & upon his desires am now gone to live with him att his Mother's (in Fisher St. in Red Lyon Square), I hope you will excuse my not giving you notice of this before as well as my abrupt leaving of your house, I was in fear of putting you in a passion the sight of which my temper cannot very well bare.' The secret had been kept a week. Mary writes more fully to her grandfather to forgive her for having 'married the only parson in the world I thought capable of making me happy.' He is her equal in every respect but 'in point of fortune,' and she is confident 'his personal merits will atone for that defect.' John Keeling, of Southill, also writes a full account of himself, with many protestations of his devotion, and anxiously clears himself of interested motives in his clandestine marriage with an heiress under age. Sir Ralph was not easily appeased. He had been kind and generous to his granddaughter, and could not understand how much courage the girl needed to be frank with him. Her uncle John interceded for her, and Rachel Lady Russell, now rapidly becoming 'stark blind,' longed to make peace for little Molly, when her friend, Lady Gardiner, told her all about it. The latter writes to Sir Ralph:

June 16,
1693.

June 18,
1693.

'My Lady Rossel told me isterday that my Lord Soffolks daughter was lately marryed much wors, for she has marryed A vally de shamber, so said, yr granddaughter had not dishonrd herselfe only brought herself to live meanly, therefore hoped you wod pardon her, & not make it so great a Consarn to you as to predygiss yr helth & much more to this purpos. And I beg of you to take this advice from her as well as from mee, to make the best of what is past recovery, & wish I could heare shee had bin to beg yr pardon, who I dare say cannot think herselfe hapy till shee has it, but know her temper is so shy, as that shee never could speak her mind to you, wch has bin one of her great failings.'

June 20,
1693.

Lady Gardiner, who loved her dearly, writes to him again of Molly's first reappearance in the family after her 'stolen maching.' 'Deare Brother, Isterday Mr. Keeling brought yr granddaughter to mee, wch I confes was the sadest meeting I ever had with her, & maid my children stand like mutes being so full of grife. Bot I told my mind to him fust; & at last took corage to spake to her wch I find is highly afflicted for offending you & begs you will give her leve to beg her pardon on her knees of you for marying without yr consent'; but the little bride feels the joy of having jilted Mr. Dormer to be very supporting nevertheless.

Sir Ralph held out even against Lady Russell's advice, but he was pursued by affectionate letters from the culprits. If he had a cold, Mr. Keeling's servant appeared with letters of respectful inquiry; as soon as he was said to be better, they each wrote to congratulate him. The bride appealed to him 'to recall your wonted affection towards me, & Sr lett it not offend you that nothing but the want of your blessing can make me uneasie for otherwise I am perfectly happy.' Her husband was a gentleman by birth and breeding: he 'was the son of Sir John Kelyng Sergt at Law,' and grandson of Sir John Keeling, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who died in 1671. His sister Martha was the second wife of Sir John Osborne of Chicksands, Dorothy Osborne's brother; and Mary Keeling and her husband pay long visits to

'Brother & Sister Osborne' in the home so well known to us from Dorothy's letters.¹ Another time John Keeling is carrying his wife down to Knebworth to his brother-in-law Sir Wm. Lytton's, where they stay a fortnight, and Mary is 'very well and Merry,' she writes to Sir Ralph. 'I have ^{July 19, 1693.} been received with the greatest civility by all my husband's relations imaginable & he, except in fortune, hath all the good qualifications you could have wished for me in a husband to render me completely happy . . . I cannot live in your displeasure & unless you design the breaking of my heart for an atonement I beg of you Sir no longer to defer your blessing.' John Keeling's 'endeavours for a reconciliation' continue to be 'restless in pursuit of it.' Sir Ralph yields at last, and Mary's short married life seems to have been very happy. They visit some of her old neighbours in 1695, Mrs. Duncombe at East Claydon and Mrs. Butterfield at the Rectory, travelling with a man and maid, 'on single horses.'

Mary Keeling died in the spring of 1696, after giving ^{Feb. 10, 1696.} birth to a daughter, also christened Mary, to whom Sir Ralph was godfather. For some weeks it seemed as if the baby would live, but 'Miss Keeling,' as the little mite is styled in the letters, died in May—the last of her race. Mary Verney, the widow, was in one of the long silent fits which often succeeded her hysterical attacks, when Cary Stewkeley told her of the death of 'Miss,' as she always called her daughter. 'She said not a word, but her eyes filled with tears, & I think that she understood.'

Mary Verney lived on till 1715, having survived all her descendants, and her faithful steward 'Anthony Dover, Batchelor,' whose whole life was devoted to her service. At times her mind seemed to wake up again; she would ask for needlework, and be very busy over it; she would send her love and duty to Sir Ralph, and thank him for the improvements he had been making in her garden. The poor people of the village, whom she loved, continued to

¹ *Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir W. Temple*, edited by Judge Parry.

cherish her memory. In the parish books of East Claydon it is recorded that 20s. a year are given away 'on the 5th of June being the day of the death of Mrs. Mary Abell alias Verney, the Great Bell tolling whylst the money is distributing . . . She was the Relict of Edmund Verney Esq^{re} . . . who for several years, XXX, was very Melancholy, during her husband's life . . . & continued soe 27 years after his decease, Lady of this Manor; and notwithstanding her lunacy shee was a Woman of Extraordinary Goodness, Piety & Devotion. She departed this life in the 74th year of her age.' Her property, which had been the subject of so much scheming, reverted to the Abell family, but in 1726 William Abell sold it to Ralph Verney, 2nd Viscount Fermanagh, for 25,800*l*.

In 1692 John Verney makes his family very happy by his second marriage, with 'Mary, one of the daughters of the Hon^{ble} Sir Francis Lawley, Baronet, of St. Powell,¹ Shropshire, Master of H. M. Jewel-office,' and of Anne Whitmore his wife. Mary was a tall, dignified woman, aged thirty-one, of a gracious presence, and the mode in which her black hair towered above her forehead made her statelier still. John presents her with 'a breast jewel worth about 100*l*.': 'Diamonds are cheaper than they were a dozen years ago, I design to buy her another toy of 50*l*. after marriage in what she likes best.' He gives her a set of 'Dressing table plate, & brushes & a looking glass; she said her Mother designed her such a thing but now she would have it in somewhat else . . . I have put side glasses to my Coach, & taken off the redd Tassels from my harness & put on White ones & also white trappings on ye bridles & made new Liveries for my Serv^{ts}, the Arms I will alter shortly by putting her Coate with mine.' It is suggested that they should be married privately at the Abbey 'after Morning service on Sunday wch ends at 11 a'clock; her mother saith

¹ The name is thus spelt on the monument in Middle Claydon Church, and in John Verney's note-book, but the old home of the Lawleys was Spoonhill, in the parish of Much Wenlock; and there seems no trace of 'St. Powell.'

that as the Quire is the publickest so it is the privatest place ; but as the Doores are all of open wainscote soe that people may look in at any time, & you know it is a thorowfare, I do not admire my Ly. Lawley's contrivance of privacy, but I said nothing.'

'As to my marriage,' he writes again to his father, ^{July 13, 1692.} 'Sunday being a Sacrament day it seems it could not be at St. James', unless we could have come by 6 in the morn^g, for there being Prayers at 7, some are allways from that time in the Chappell, & therefore wee were marryed at West^r in Harry ^{July 10, 1692} the 7th's Chap^l by Dr Rich^d Only . . . my Wife desires her humble duty to you, if she were here she w^d write to you herself . . . for she is an Extraordinary sweet natured woman.' The letters of congratulation are pleasant reading. The bride's aunt, Lady Whitmore, is 'shure, if Mr Verney be not happie in a Wife, I shall beleeeve it his fault & so I shall tell him when I am Aquanted with him, as I now desire to be, he being yours'; her brother Tom Lawley writes to her with extreme affection; and the Palmers put sad memories aside, to give John's wife a kindly welcome.

Dame Penelope prides herself that she made 'the first ^{July 19, 1692.} motion of this marrig, I dare answer for the Bride y^t she will be very kind to the childering for that I have always told her.' 'Ye more I se y^r daughter so much ye more I like her,' Nancy writes to Sir Ralph, '& insted of my advising of her I thinke myself fitt to receve advis from her; wⁿ all y^e family did din wth us & we again at Whit Hall we wanted nothing nor nobody but y^r self to complet y^e Weding solemnity, but we often drank y^r health & hartily wished you wth us.' There is much interchange of hospitalities, and it is the wonder of both families how with so small a park Sir Ralph can furnish them all with so much venison.

John has a negro page, who waits upon his wife; he is described, when he is first brought to Middle Claydon, as a Moor of Guinea of about six years of age.' His baptism (October 6, 1689) is entered in the Parish Register; the little black boy's gossips were 'his Master Mr John Verney,' and the party from the White House, 'Edmund and Molly Verney

& Cary Stewkeley'; he was named Peregrine Tyam. He appears in the background of Mrs. John Verney's picture, and on September 14, 1707, there is an entry of his burial at Claydon. My Lady Latimer has 'a dwarf' in her household at this time; it was one of the fashions of the day that fair Englishwomen should be served by such uncouth pages.

Sept. 20,
1693.

There is a bright little letter from Mrs. John Verney to Sir Ralph, thanking him for a happy visit with her husband and his children to Claydon; 'My father and mother send thare sarves, they have bin to give joy to Sir Marten Beckman y^t is new married, he is 67 & his bride 60, this increases my feare of a mother in law, but nothing shall make me remane les then Yr ever Dutyfull & obedint Dau^r & sarvant, Mary Verney.'

Oct. 1693.

She writes to John at Wasing that 'Bro. Palmer' has dined with her; 'Cousin Kellin & Cousen Denton' are with her; she nurses little Ralph very kindly through a fever, and wins all hearts in the family circle. John's happiness seems complete when a son is born to them, to whom the two grandfathers and Lady Whitmore stand sponsors; then the child dies, and Mary falls a victim to small-pox when she is expecting for the second time to become a mother. Her husband sums up the story on her monument. 'She had one son named John who dyed within the year, and lyeth with her in the vault within the Chancell [at Middle Claydon]. She departed this life on the 24th Aug. 1694 aged 33 years.'

It will be seen by this review of the family history, that Sir Ralph was paying the penalty of protracted life; he had outlived almost all his contemporaries. Two infirm widows, Cary Gardiner and Betty Adams, alone remained of the large circle of brothers and sisters except Tom, who could scarcely be said to belong to it. His old friends and correspondents, Dr. Denton and Sir Roger Burgoyne, Sir Nathaniel and Lady Hobart, Doll Leeke and Dame Vere Gawdy, had entered into rest. The Great Rebellion, the Restoration, the Revolution, in all of which he had played his part, had become matters of history. Having thrown himself with much zest into the work of the Convention Parliament, which consolidated the



Lentall pinx.

MARY VERNEY, *née* LAWLEY, SECOND WIFE OF JOHN VERNEY

work that the Long Parliament of his youth had begun, he expected to be re-elected for Buckingham in February 1690, but that inveterate schemer Sir Richard Temple had secretly taken measures to secure the two seats for himself and for Alexander Denton, whose share in the transaction was as little creditable. There was an outburst of indignation in the family, but Sir Ralph saved the situation by his magnanimity. With gentle dignity he reminded his godson and his old colleague that it was needless to intrigue against a man who had no private interests to serve, and was ready to retire whenever the borough found a worthier representative. He had the satisfaction of feeling that he had left Buckingham the better for his long political connection with it. He had, as Mr. Butterfield writes, 'erected a lasting monument of his munificence' in the town hall (often promised by rival candidates, and forgotten when the elections were over), 'built about 1685 at the expense of Sir Ralph Verney.' The July 17, 1692. borough was in good humour, for the long vexed question of the locality of the Assizes had been settled in its favour. 'The Bailiffe & 2 Burgesses of Buckingham have been att London to give the Queene thankes for the Assizes, & have kist her Majestie's hand, & are come down with great joy beyond expression.'

Sir Ralph keeps up his interest in public affairs, and rejoices at the victorious conclusion of King William's Irish campaigns. 'Such joy was never seen in town since K. Charles came in, for in all streets & alleys it was so light that you might have pickt up a pin in the streets, with bon-fires & lights in rows in the windows as was set as thick as they could stand.' Sir Ralph finds ample occupation in his retirement, and is as hospitable as ever. 'No doubt but you are always full of companey,' writes a grateful relation. 'Who would not be glad to come to Middle Claydon when Sir Raph Verney is there? We would make the Kingdom happy if we could plant persons of y^r compassionate humor to help us poor mortals, y^t cannot help ourselves.'

Sir Ralph is still the central figure round which all the others are grouped. His lifelong friend, Sir Roger Burgoyne

had drawn this portrait of him in his sixtieth year: 'However you come by it, you have the quickest intelligence of any man I know. . . . You are now become, I think, the Generall Trustee of all that know you. Your Charity, Piety, & Friendship, though it bringe much outward trouble, yet I am confident it is attended with a great deal of inward contentment; it is so naturall to you soe to do kindnesses to your friends, that I beleeve the pleasure they have in the favours they receive, cannot exceed that you take yourself in those you give.'

His Puritanism was so graciously compounded that it was to him his grandchildren and their friends appealed if a wild young spark was to be got out of a scrape that threatened the gallows, or a damsel, gentle or simple, was disappointed in love. 'Tell me not of y^r age,' writes his favourite sister when he was already an elderly man, 'for I am resolved to think you but 40 years old this twenty years, if I live so long, for more than that I would not have you, so long as I live, but whatever your age is, I thank God y^r infirmities are not so many as most young men have.'

Sir Ralph spent the spring of 1696 in town; he was racked with a cough, which the east winds increased even when he kept 'close at home,' and the 'dryed walnuts,' which he took medicinally, do not sound like a comforting remedy. His lean figure was worn to a shadow, and he suffered from many infirmities of old age without being mastered by them; the letters he dictated were clear and precise as of old; his head was as sound and his heart as kind as ever.

In the early summer Sir Ralph made the last of his many journeys from London to Claydon. It was an inclement season, 'the ordinary sort of people find it as cold as in winter,' yet the relations hear with horror that Sir Ralph has had made for himself 'a bathing tob.' He revives a little with the satisfaction of being at home again, he gets into the Fir Tree Walk in the warmest hours of the day, and 'on all faire days he goes out in the Coach to take the aire.'

The faithful old sisters, who are in 'drooping spirits,'

long to nurse him, but do not like to propose a visit unasked ; Sir Ralph is never lonely at Claydon : he sees Coleman daily about the farms, and keeps up a brave show of transacting his ordinary business. It is suggested to him, however, that a favourite niece, Margaret Adams, has been ill, and would be benefited by country air ; Sir Ralph gladly asks her to Claydon, and she never leaves him again. His other niece, Cary Stewkeley, is still living at the White House, having been asked by the Abells to continue her care of Mary Verney, and so the cousins meet daily. Cary was welcomed wherever there was sickness or sorrow, she had gentleness and patience combined 'to a miracle, with an undaunted & masculin resolution, the meekness of a lamb & the courage of a Lyon.'

The gentle maiden ladies, who had already reached middle life, were welcomed as young girls in so venerable a household, and got on admirably with Sir Ralph and his old servants. They shared in Mrs. Lillie's disappointment when her master sent away her savoury meats untasted ; they did their best to help the faithful Hodges when he strove to confine Sir Ralph within the paths of prudence, and kept John Verney constantly informed of his father's condition.

The twice widowed John was courting a wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Dan. Baker and his beautiful wife, Barbara Steele. Her good sense and sweet temper had made a pleasant impression on the older members of the family.¹ She proved herself a good wife and kind stepmother in after years. John came down to Claydon at intervals with 'Little Master' ; 'the sight of you & your child did much to revive Sir Ralph,' the cousins write, but John was busy with the settlements, meeting Alderman Baker, and attending upon 'the young gentlewoman,' who sent Sir Ralph her humble service. Sir Ralph, unselfish as ever, would not hear of John's leaving his 'mistresse till your occasions which I know are great be over.' He writes in much detail about his son's marriage,

¹ Her sister Sarah married Narcisus Luttrell ; her niece Dorothy Baker, was ancestress of the first Lord Sheffield.

corresponds with John's little daughter Mary, and only makes the briefest allusions to his own failing health. Cary Gardiner recommends many herbs and drugs, and prescribes fomentations for his swollen leg, but Sir Ralph does not wish to be fussed over. When Peg Adams wants him to leave off his asses' milk, he only retorts upon his nurse that she herself drinks much more whey than is good for her. Betty Adams, old before her time, yet performs his commissions with alacrity. 'I am glad you lick your speting-pot,' she writes, 'it is the handsomest I could get. I shall obey your orders about the Hucaback.' Her brother continues to send up his welcome hampers of Claydon delicacies, and desires the cloths to be returned to him. 'The pig was as good as one could eat,' writes the grateful Cary.

Aug. 11,
1696.

Sir Ralph still gets to church, though he feels 'as weak as a two year old child,' and on a Sunday in August he has to go out in the midst of Mr. Butterfield's sermon, forbidding the ladies to disturb themselves. When they rejoined him he was looking 'most lamentably,' and they persuaded him to be carried up to his room in a chair. 'Mrs. Lillie is extream carfull of him, and gets all those things for him, which he used to love and will take.'

Cary Stewkeley would often bring 'her nightclothes in her pockett,' when her cousin was more than usually anxious, but Sir Ralph never saw any reason for her to remain, and was afraid she might be censured for neglecting her proper charge. So she returned that Sunday night with a heavy heart to East Claydon; but when she got back in the morning Sir Ralph had revived, and the next day was one to be long and lovingly remembered. Both ladies wrote a full account of it to John.

'Cousin Denton, Cousin Drake, Mun Woodward, and one Mr. Lewsis' (Lucy?) had come over to inquire, and the hospitable old man was delighted to see them. Peg Adams persuaded him to stay upstairs, and the whole company assembled in his dressing-room. 'He dined at table with us,' Cary writes, 'and I thought for him he eat a very good dinner, and he spok as harty as he has done this twell-

month.' 'Dr. Blackmore desires him to forbear beer,' writes Peg, and the gentlemen came to her aid by assuring him 'that wine and water was propperer for him,' and 'very cheerfully he talked with them. He so often changes that I am unwilling to please myself too much with his amendment, he knows not of my writing, but told me last night that he would by no means have you come, until you had Leasure . . . with much adoe we have got him to have a little hartening broth made for him,' and he will sometimes take 'half his porringer full of jelly.' Sir Ralph has given Hodges some venison for his friends, which John is asked to send 'to Mr Lovet Linen Draper at the White Bear in Cornhill, a little beyond the Exchange'; he writes anxiously, 'Sir my Master I think growes weaker & weaker, & eates very little at dinner, hee keepes his chamber & lyes down on his bed a little after his diner, till about six that he rises to prayer, he gets little sleep in the night. I watched last night with him & I thought him fine & pert in the morning, but hee fell off again in the afternoone as hee doth most Daies.'

There is a break in the letters when John is at Claydon; by the middle of September he is back in Hatton Gardens, and on the 20th Sir Ralph sends him up a hamper, and Sept. 20, 1696. dictates an admirable business letter. He has sent to Mr. Busby about 'Son Keeling's bill in Chancery'; he acknowledges the return of 'the Cloth your pigg went in,' and concludes 'for my owne health, I still grow weaker, pray God bless you and yours.'

It was almost the last effort of the brave spirit and the failing body; 'he lyes in his bed all the morning, and upon it all the afternoon,' and 'dus not now rise from it at night to eat his supper nor say his prayers.

Sir Richard Temple comes over to dine with his old House of Commons colleague, but, finding Sir Ralph in bed, he goes on to London. Cary Gardiner prays for him many times a day on her knees, and her friend, the saintly Lady Russell, sends him an affectionate message that she makes it her daily petition that he may recover. But the prayers

of devout women were no longer to keep the tired old man from his rest. On the morning of the 24th Cary Stewkeley found on her arrival that the master of the house knew not whether she went or stayed, so to her cousin's great relief she settled herself at Claydon House and took her part in watching by the bedside, and in writing the detailed accounts sent daily to John. Edmund would have shared their vigil; John, having satisfied himself that his father was well-cared for, could not stand the long days of inaction.

'He lays pretty quiet, but says nothing but rambling discours nor knows nobody now.' 'All his servants are as diligent and careful as possible, two have watched with him every night.' 'Sometimes I think he may live 2 or 3 days then I think not so long, God knows all we have now to lose in him good man, I do so pray for his happy passage out of this world. I am in so great a consarn I can hardly tell what I say or do.'

Sept. 24,
1696.

Mr. Butterfield was sent for to recommend Sir Ralph's soul to God. There was a solemn pause of some hours, and then a horse was saddled in haste to carry letters to town. 'My dear Uncle, your good father,' Cary writes, 'dyed at 12 o'clock this night.' Both ladies address their letters to Sir John Verney, Baronet, and while praying that he may bear his loss with resignation, wish him joy in the same breath of his new estate and honours.

Sept. 26,
1696.

John sends down orders immediately to Coleman about 'the next duty and service that can be performed for my father, which is to have him laid where he commanded. . . . His body is to be embalmed. . . . I had thought to invite the neighbouring Gentry to the funerall which I computed to be about 40 or 50, but this afternoon meeting with some near relations and opening my Father's sealed-up will, wee find that he orders to be burried *as privately and with as little pomp as may be*, these are his very words,' and John 'not being able to find a medium (without giving offence) betwixt a private burriall and inviting all the neighbouring gentry,' decides upon the former and desires his letter to be read out to the ladies and to Mrs. Lillie.



Sir Godfrey Kneller pinx.

SIR JOHN VERNEY, BART.

'Pray give my service to my kindred and to my friends,' he writes, 'and have a care of my Deare Father's body.' He desires that the Hall should be hung with black baize, 'the entry from the Hall door to the Spicery door, and the best Court Porch, likewise the Brick Parlour from top to bottom,' where a dozen chairs are to be covered with black and the three great tables.

John's decision was not approved of; Peg Adams expressed the general opinion of Claydon when she wrote, 'I should have thought that a man so generally known to be loved in the country, it would have been very decent to have some of the gentry carry him to his grave'; and Cary Gardiner in her bed 'told all the clocks from one to six' thinking over her nephew's interpretation of his father's will; 'to have no pomp,' she writes, 'may relate to straingers. . . . I confes on serious thoughts I think tis best to bury him publickly, without thos lengths as my brother may mean pomp.'

Her daughter Cary had remained on a few days at Claydon House, that she and her cousin might receive the Sacrament together, on that first Sunday when they had leisure to realise the greatness of their loss. She now wrote from East Claydon: 'Let me know when my deare Uncle is beried that I may steall out to waight on his body to the grave since it is so privat.' But the relations acknowledged that there was no want of affection on John's part, 'no child dus more lament for a father than he does,' and when 'he went out of town to attend his father to his grave with all the four children,' Cary Gardiner had no other regret than that she was 'too infirm to pay him that last love and service, who loved him as the best of brothers ought to be loved . . . and that must shortly go to him that I beeleave a blest Saint in Heaven.'

It was a cold, wet autumn day when the family gathered round the vault in Middle Claydon Church; the neighbours, rich and poor, waited not for an invitation to show respect to their old friend. 'The rooms looked very handsomly, though the Heavens wept with all his relations at his

Oct. 13,
1696.

funeral.' 'You had so much mob,' writes Nancy Nicholas, 'what would it have been had it been otherwais [than private] Ye King was last Sunday at Whitehall Chapl, tis the first time since the Queen dyed, and I was told by one that was their he looked full of trouble and concern.'

Oct. 12,
1696.

'I thank God that we all got home without any accident,' writes Cary to John from East Claydon after the funeral, 'but all one side of me was as wet as if I had been abroad, for it was so dark we durst not put up the glass, and the wind and the rain did beat so in, and indeed I have taken a cold and have been ill ever since.'

* * * * *

When, in after years, a master-hand drew the picture of an old English squire, the 'Coverley Papers' furnished 'so living a likeness of the man, and endeared him to their readers to such a point, that his death had at last to be announced with all the circumstances of an overpowering affliction. "I question not," says Addison, "but that my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it."'

After sharing the vicissitudes of Sir Ralph's long life, in the 'Verney Letters,' it is impossible to stand by his grave without a kindred feeling of regret. Two hundred years and more have elapsed since that stormy October day when he was laid to rest, but Claydon still has kept his memory green, and we would part from him with some comfortable words, written while Sir Ralph Verney was yet a boy:

'But above all, beleeve it, the sweetest Canticle is, Nunc dimittis, when a Man hath obtained worthy Ends. . . . Death has this also, That it openeth the Gate to good Fame.'

503-584



Photo: S. G. Payne

CLAYDON HOUSE AND MIDDLE CLAYDON CHURCH IN 1886

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ROTHY. = JOHN VERNEY, living a
Surrey, *atat.* 40,
dated 22nd July, 1

ROBERT, *ob. s.p.* MARY
liv

ANNE, m. to Sir Nicholas JAM
Poyntz, of Acton, co. I
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EDMUND VERNEY.
a priest.

PHN STEWKE- MARY, b. 1628;
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PEDIGREE OF THE VERNEYS,

FIRST OF FLEETMARSTON, CO. BUCKS, AFTERWARDS OF PENLEY, CO. HERTS, AND ULTIMATELY OF MIDDLE CLAYDON, CO. BUCKS, FROM 1400.

JOHN DE VERNEY, of Fleetmarston, 1401-1433; 1443, returned amongst gentry of Bucks, 'Fuller's Worthies,' i. 147.

EDWARD DE VERNEY, =

RALPH VERNEY, =

The 1st Sir RALPH VERNEY, Sheriff of London 1456; Lord Mayor 1465; knighted 1471; M.P. for London, 1472. = EMME, d. of Pyking, by whom she had a son John Will dated 11th June, and proved 25th June, 1478.

Sir JOHN VERNEY, of Penley, knight, ob. August 31st, 1505; a' = MARGARET, d. and heiress of Sir Robert Whittingham, of Penley, and Catherine his wife. Will proved 21st April, 1509. Bur. with her husband.

The 2nd Sir RALPH VERNEY, of King's Langley, co. Herts, = ELEANOR, d. of Sir Geoffrey Pole, K.G. knt.; d. 6th July, 1533; bur. at King's Langley.

MARGARET, m., in 1467, to Sir Edward Raleigh, of Farnborough, co. Warwick. She was alive in 1478, and had a daughter Joan. (Dugdale's 'Warwickshire,' i. 529.)

BEATRICE, m. to Henry Danvers, of London, mercer, and of Cotherop, co. Oxon.

1. MARGARET, d. and one of three co-heiresses of John Iwardby, of Quainton, co. Bucks.

The 3rd Sir RALPH VERNEY, of Penley, knt.; d. 8th May, 1525; bur. at Ashridge and removed to Albury.

2. ANNE, d. of Edmund Weston, of Boston, co. Lincoln, and afterwards of Sutton, co. Surrey; bur. at Ashridge and removed to Albury.

3. ELIZABETH, d. of wid. of John Breton, Sheriff of London, A.D. 1521.

JOHN

ROBERT living in 1546.

CECILIA, mar. to Sir Edward Chamberlaine.

ANNE, mar. to Dame.

2. DOROTHY, = JOHN VERNEY, living at Mortlake, co. Surrey, *etat.* 40, A.D. 1523. Will dated 22nd July, 1540.

ROBERT, ob. *s.p.*

MARY, m. to Lewis Reynoldes; living 14th March, 1547-8.

The 4th Sir RALPH VERNEY, of Penley, aged 16, A.D. 1525; d. 26th April, 1546, *etat.* 37; bur. at Ashridge and removed to Albury.

= ELIZABETH, d. of Edmund Lord Bray, and one of the six co-heiresses of John Lord Bray. m., 2ndly, to Sir Richard Catesby, of Ashby St. Leger's, co. Northampton; 3rdly, to W. Clark, esq.; 4thly, to H. Phillips, esq. She d. 1574.

ELEANOR, m. to Sir Edward Greville.

CATHERINE, m. to Sir John Conway, of Arrow, co. Warwick.

ANNE, d. unm.

HENRY FRANCIS

EDMUND VERNEY, tried for his share in Dudley's conspiracy, 11th June, 1556; ob. *s.p.* 13th Dec., 1558; *etat.* 31.

DOROTHY, d. of Sir Edmund Peckham, of Denham, co. Bucks; ob. 23rd May, 1547; bur. Bittlesden Abbey, Bucks.

JOHN VERNEY, d. before 1558.

1. FRANCES, d. of John Hastings, of Elford, co. Oxon, wid. of Thomas Redmayne, of Northmarston, co. Bucks.

2. AUDREY, d. of William Gardner, of Fulmer, co. Bucks, wid. of Sir Peter Carew the younger; d. 1588; bur. at Albury.

The 1st Sir EDMUND VERNEY, of Penley, knt.; d. 11th Jan., 1599-1600; bur. at Albury.

S. MARY, d. of William Blakey, of Sparrowham, co. Norfolk; m., 1st, to Geoffrey Turville; 2ndly, to William St. Barbo; d. 1642, *etat.* 95.

RALPH VERNEY; prob. in 1608, of High Holborn, gent.

URIAN VERNEY, bur. at Middle Claydon.

LETTICE, d. of Sir George Giffard, knt., lessee of Claydon House.

RICHARD VERNEY.

FRANCIS VERNEY, tried for his share in Dudley's conspiracy, 18th June, 1556.

ANNE, m. to Sir Nicholas Poyntz, of Acton, co. Gloucester, knt.

JANE, m. to Sir Francis Hynde, of Madingley, co. Camb., knt.

Sir FRANCIS VERNEY, of Penley, knt.; mar. settlement dated 4th June, 1599 ob. *s.p.* 6th Sept., 1615, at Messina.

= URSULA, d. of William St. Barbe, esq., and of Mary, his wife, afterwards 3rd wife of the 1st Sir Edmund Verney. She m., 2ndly, in 1619 to William Clark, of Hitcham, co. Bucks, esq.; 3rdly, to John Chicheleyses; d. 1670.

The 2nd Sir EDMUND VERNEY, of Middle Claydon, co. Bucks, = MARGARET, eldest d. of Sir Thomas Denton, of Hillesden, knt.; b. 1st Jan., 1590. Knight Marshal and Standard Bearer to Charles I.; killed at Edgehill, 1642.

MARGARET, eldest d. of Sir Thomas Denton, of Hillesden, co. Bucks, knt.; born 1594; d. 1641.

EDMUND VERNEY, a priest.

8 RALPH VERNEY, knt. and bart., b. 1613; d. 1696.

= MARY, surviving d. and heiress of John Blacknall, b. 1616; d. 1650.

1. JOYCE = THOMAS VERNEY, b. 1615; d. 1767

2. ELIZABETH KENDALL, child ob. *infans.*

EDMUND VERNEY, b. 2nd Nov., 1616; murdered at Drogheda, Nov. 1649; unm.

HENRY VERNEY, b. 19th April, 1618; d. 1671; unm.

JOHN VERNEY, b. 19th July, 1619; ob. *infans.*

RICHARD VERNEY, b. 14th Feb., 1630; died as a boy.

SUSANNA, b. 18th April, 1631; d. 1651; no children survived.

= RICHARD ALPORT, of Overton, Malpas, Cheshire. He m. 2ndly, Elizabeth Bort.

1. JOHN DENTON, of Fawley, Oxon.

= PENELOPE, b. 19th June, 1622; d. 1695; three children, who died young.

2. Sir J. OSBORN, knt., 8th son of Sir Rich. Osborn, of Knockmore Castle, co. Waterford.

MARGARET, b. 30th Sept., 1623; d. 1667 *s.p.*

= Sir THOS. ELMES, of Green's Norton, Northamptonshire.

1. Sir THOS. = CARY, b. 1626; d. 1704. GARDINER, knt., of Cuddesdon; killed 1645; one dau., Margaret, d. unm. 1702.

2. JOHN STEWART, of Preshaw, widower.

MARY, b. 1628; d. 1694.

= ROBERT LLOYD, of Chester, d. 1695.

ELIZABETH, b. 1633; d. 1721; ob. *infans.*

= Rev. CHAS. ADAMS, of Great Bad-dow, Essex.

MARY ARELL, b. 1641; d. 1715.

= EDMUND VERNEY, b. 1636; d. 1688.

MARY ob. *infans.*

ANNA MARIA, b. 1634; d. 1638.

MARGARET, b. 1639; d. 1647.

1. ELIZABETH PALMER, b. 1664; d. 1686.

= JOHN, b. 1640; succeeded his father; afterwards created Viscount Fermanagh.

2. MARY LAWLEY; b. 1661; d. 1694.

3. ELIZABETH BAKER, b. 1671.

RALPH, b. 1647; ob. *infans.*

VERNEY, ob. *infans.*

JOHN. CARY.

PENELOPE, m. Wm. Viccars

CAROLINE.

KATHERINE, m. Ogle.

ISABELLA.

HUMPHREY, d. unm.

VERNEY = ANNE GERY

MARY

RUTH a son, ob. *infans.*

MARGARET.

ISABELLA

RALPH, b. 1666; d. unm. 1696.

EDMUND, b. 1663; d. unm. 1690

MARY, b. 1675; = JOHN KEELING; a d. Mary, ob. *infans.*

RALPH, b. 1683, = CATHERINE PASCHALL of Baddow Hall, d. 1748.

ELIZABETH, b. 1681; d. unm.

MARY, b. 1682. = Colonel LOVEITT; child ren d. *infans.*

MARGARET, = Sir THOMAS CAVE, from whom Lord Brayce descends.

2 sons ob. *infantes.*

JOHN VERNEY, = MARY NICHOLSON = RICHARD CALVERT, d. 1737.

MARY VERNEY, Baroness Fermanagh, succeeded to Claydon, 1791; d. unm. 1810.

CATHERINE = Rev. ROBERT WRIGHT, both took the name of Verney when she succeeded to Claydon by her half-sister's will; d. *s.p.* 1827.

RALPH, 2nd EARL VERNEY; = MARY HERRING, d. *s.p.* 1791.

ELIZABETH = BENNETT, EARL OF HARBOROUGH.

Several children, d. in infancy.

CATHERINE, d. unm. 1750.

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